

# *The Illuminator*

SPRING 2018



Light of Life  
Ministry

**Reflecting the Light of Christ into a Dark World**

A  
Conservative Evangelical  
Newsletter of  
Light of Life Ministry

*A Tribute to Jim Jones  
1953 - 2018*

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## A Word from the New Director Dan Shapley

As most of you already know, Jim Jones, or J. Oliver Jones as he would refer to himself in publications, the Founder and Director of Light of Life Ministry, went

to be with his beloved Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, on February 5, 2018. He was a man of exceptional skill, ability and giftedness. He leaves a big hole to fill in this ministry, because for all practical purposes, he was the ministry. He was the President/Director, the accountant, the publisher, the writer, and the businessman behind the ministry. He traveled representing the ministry, enrolled participants in the Wesley Institutes, preached and taught, led mission trips and led tours of Israel. We will miss all that he gave and all that he was to this ministry.

But what we will miss most is the comfortable ease we found surrounding him. His way with people was winsome and inviting. I don't think he ever really met a stranger. He was open and genuine. He was a good friend and a godly confidant. He was a fellow servant of Jesus Christ and was constantly pursuing a deeper relationship with Him and a desire to lead others to Him. What we will miss most is our friend!

This edition of *The Illuminator* is dedicated to his memory and you will hear from his family, friends and colleagues about what they appreciated most about him. Even if you knew Jim well, I am sure that you will glean a fresh appreciation for the man God used to accomplish so much with a life devoted to God's service.

When Jim had determined that his contribution to Light of Life Ministry would need to be more limited, he asked me to meet with him and we discussed possible solutions. He wanted me to take

the position of Director, partly because I was near and he could show me what he had been doing and direct me in how to do it. That was the first part of December and by the last of December, it was clear that he would not be able to fulfil that plan. The Board met in January and elected me to succeed Jim as President and Director of Light of Life Ministry. Just two months after our conversation, he would be with the Lord.

It is a privilege to follow in Jim's steps as the newly-elected Director of Light of Life Ministry. Yet, even as God brings along others to embrace the ministry and expand its outreach, we will continue to thank God for the blessing of the life and ministry of Jim Jones. I'm reminded of the passage in Revelation:

Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, "Write; 'Blessed *are* the dead who die in the Lord from now on.'"

"Yes," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them." **Revelation 14:13 NKJV**

Jim has died in the Lord and is resting from his labor, but his works will continue to follow him through the ministry of Light of Life.

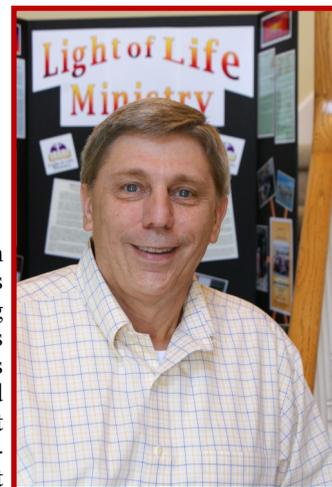
As a tribute to Jim and the on-going work of LOLM, we are going to press as I write this to publish the next study in the Wesley Institute: 208—*Hermeneutics, A Structured Approach to the Study of God's Word*. Lanny and Danny Carpenter have produced an excellent primer on how to understand the Bible. It will be a welcome addition to our other study guides. Also, I have started editing another study that Jim had started but was unable to complete.

Please keep this ministry in your prayers as we press forward, seeking to pursue the vision that Jim had for LOLM since its inception.

**God Bless! ♥**

# A Statement of Christian Experience and Commitment

J. Oliver Jones, 2008



At the age of nine, I came under conviction of sin (yes, a nine-year-old can have sin issues) during one of those October revivals in my father's church where the guest evangelist preached long and hard against it. The next day there was so much fear that death would come before having a chance to get to the altar that evening, I refused to ride my bike, climb the trees, or even go outside to play. My place that evening at the church was on the front pew, as close to the altar as I could get. After thinking the preacher would never get through and give the invitation, finally those wonderful words, *"Just as I am without one plea..."* rang out. In one desperate leap my knees hit the altar, and there to the best of my understanding, I accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior, and I experienced peace and release for my sin.

As a teenager I struggled with life issues as do most all teens. However, there was never a day that went by I was not aware of God "watching" me and a desire to please Him with my life and actions. I most certainly was not always successful in that endeavor, but the desire was always there. By most standards my lifestyle was acceptable for a Christian young person. Actively involved in Christian youth groups, president of the district United Methodist Youth Fellowship, high school class president, captain of the basketball team, member of the National Honor Society, etc., there were outward signs that I had my life in order. At the age of sixteen, I began to feel the call to ministry but was not anxious to accept it. Finally, at the age of 24, I accepted the "call" to ministry and enrolled in Free Will Baptist Bible College to prepare for public ministry. Everything outwardly looked wonderful. But what most never knew was how many times during those years I had gone forward to the altars of dozens of churches begging God for salvation. On several occasions I sought the counsel of pastors and teachers, professing that I was not sure I had ever been saved. The response was almost always the same...first,

shock, followed with any number of plans of salvation leading me to accept Jesus as Savior. There was never anything asked or required of me that I had not done a hundred times before, yet the heartache persisted.

Finally, in the fall of 1979, I visited Bible College Professor LeRoy Forlines with the same issue of doubt and frustration told to so many others. But the answer I received was different; **"Jimmy," he said, "you are already saved; you just don't know it!"** He proceeded not to lead me through any plan of salvation but to ask me to explain to him saving faith. During this discussion it became obvious that my understanding of faith and works was all confused. My heart believed salvation was by faith in Christ, while my head kept telling me that I needed to do better or I would never deserve salvation! By the end of that afternoon, I had come to realize that the ground for my salvation was union with Christ. There was nothing I could do that Christ had not already done in His finished work on the cross on my behalf. The condition of my salvation, my union with Christ, was faith. The works I was so concerned about were not and could not be a condition for salvation. They would always be the result of salvation.

I had been basing my salvation on my own performance (works). While on some days that worked out pretty well, most days it did not! My faith could not be in "my works," but had to be in the work of Christ on my behalf (justification). I did not deserve salvation nor would I ever deserve it. It comes solely by the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ. Good works (sanctification) would follow as I became conformed to the image of Christ. That was God's plan for my salvation, and

it was so much better than the one I came up with on my own! On October 28, 1979, before the entire church congregation where I was a youth pastor, I made a new public statement of my faith in Christ for salvation and declared before the people, the angels, and especially Satan, that from that day forward I would never again doubt my salvation. I was a blood-bought child of God, and when my works did not line up with the image of Christ, I was to repent and forsake them, but never again confuse them with the ground of my salvation. Since that day I have had assurance of my salvation. My life is a progression toward the image of Christ. While there have been many times I have failed to live up to that image, with the help of God, like Paul, I will press on toward that mark.

Since graduating from Bible college in 1981, I have served the Lord primarily in The Southern Methodist Church as a bi-vocational pastor for some 14 years, and as an active lay teacher at the



First SMC in Nashville. In January 2006 I felt strongly that I had to leave my secular work to seek full-time service in ministry. In April 2006 this led to the start of Light of Life Ministry, a ministry committed to Christian education and evangelism. In turn this has led to my appointment as the Education Director for the General Conference of The Southern Methodist Church in October 2007. It is my heart's desire to see our people and our churches grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ, especially as it relates to sound Biblical teaching and the sharing of their faith and witness for Him to a totally lost and decadent society. There is so much I want to see accomplished in what seems to be so little time, and with what is unfortunately so little in financial resources and even fewer people to do the work. But I believe God wants to use us as Southern Methodists to make a difference in our day and in our generation. I am committed to this end as long as the Lord gives me a vision and the strength to serve. My heart's desire is to faithfully be about our Father's business! ♥

He is like a tree  
planted by streams of  
water  
that yields its fruit in  
its season,  
and its leaf does not  
wither.  
In all that he does, he  
prosperes.  
—Psalm 1:3 ESV



## In Remembrance

On February 5, 2018 James “Jim” Jones, Jr. passed away, comforted by his family members and loved ones both near and far, from his battle with cancer at his home in Kingston Springs, Tennessee.

Born May 1, 1953 in Chattanooga, Tennessee, Jim was the third child of Roberta and James Oliver Jones, Sr. He graduated from East Robertson High School and Welch College, formerly known as Free Will Baptist Bible College.

The son of a preacher, Jim accepted Jesus as his Lord and Savior at the age of nine and dedicated his life to following God’s will and spreading the love of Jesus to all he met. Jim was a friend to all and never met a stranger.

He served as a pastor in the Southern Methodist Church for 14 years and in 2006 founded Light of

Life Ministry, a ministry committed to Christian education and evangelism. It was his heart’s desire to see people grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ.

Second to his love of the Lord, was spending time with his family. Whether it was traveling across the country to tour National Parks, or planning fun Christmas getaways, there was always laughter, pranks and a lot of love.

Jim is survived by his wife, Barbara Drake Jones of 35 years; three children, James Matthew (Julie) Jones of Ponte Vedra, Florida, Christine (David) Chang of Columbia Missouri, and Scott (Nieka) Fink of Nashville Tennessee along with 8 grandchildren; Camdyn, Preston and Grayson Jones; Olivia, Camille and Elsa Chang; and Owen and Asa Fink.

He is preceded in death by his parents James Oliver Jones, Sr. and Roberta Yates Jones, and his two older sisters Linda Gail Saggan and Nancy Carol West.

Visitation will take place at First Southern Methodist Church located at 4409 Colorado Ave, Nashville, TN 37209 on Thursday, February 8th from 4:00 pm until 8 pm and again on Friday, February 9<sup>th</sup> from 12:00 pm until 2:00 pm.

Service will begin at 2:00 pm at First Southern Methodist Church on Friday, February 9th, with Reverends Jack Davis and Gary Briden officiants. Pallbearers are Ron Gasser, Clifford Gregory, Eric Morrison, Dan Shapley, Charles Spicer and Kevin West.

Burial will follow at Woodlawn Memorial Park Cemetery in Nashville, Tennessee. ♥

## A FAITHFUL HUSB AND

### *Letter Written for Jim's 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday By Barbara Jones on May 1, 2013*

*I thank God for all 60 of your years, but I am especially thankful for the past 31 years that we have spent together. You are a wonderful husband, father, Papa, and most of all, my friend.*

*Little did I know that September night on our first date what a special man God had placed in our lives.*

*The years have been so good. We have been blessed abundantly! We have raised three amazing children together. Your day in and day out modeling of what a Christian husband and father should be made our home a loving, peaceful, fun, and safe place for all of us. I know in my heart, that having you in our lives made us better.*

*We traveled all across this country....thousands of miles....and saw how truly beautiful it is. We laughed at*

*your scheduling, but agreed that we saw more than we ever dreamed possible and created memories that last a lifetime.*

*Your adventuresome spirit was contagious as we now travel not only across our country, but across the world.*

*You helped us grow spiritually, as a Christian husband and father is supposed to do. Like a lighthouse, your consistent Godly wisdom and guidance kept us safe as we journeyed through the years. Even now, our children call and seek your advice which affirms the trust and love that they have for you.*

*Time has passed so quickly. We started out with a three, four, and six-year old and now we have added three incredible "children-in-law" and six (now eight) precious grandchildren. Where has the time gone?*



Again, we are so blessed. Each season of life has been different, but we have embraced them all. Even now, as empty nesters, we are busy in ministry and are still growing in so many ways...taking classes, traveling, teaching, and having fun. I am thankful that we enjoy being and working with each other. We are a good team!

As you celebrate your 60<sup>th</sup> birthday, I just want you to know how very much I love you and how very much I have loved spending my time on this earth as your wife! I wouldn't change a thing about our life. You make me laugh every day and you make sure that I know that you love me. Life couldn't be any better.

I love you Jim,  
Barbara

### ***The Next Four and a Half Years***

Little did we know when Jim turned 60 on May 1, 2013 that in a little over two weeks our lives would be forever changed. We would enter another "season" of life...one that was unexpected and certainly didn't turn out the

way we thought it would.

On May 19<sup>th</sup> while getting ready to lead a mission's trip to the Philippines and India, Jim had a "one in a million reaction" to a vaccine taken in preparation for the trip. Jim went from being physically active to being paralyzed from the waist down in a matter of hours. From that night on Jim lived with pain every day. He had to learn to walk again and never regained total strength in his left leg.

Jim always looked for what God was trying to teach him through his life experiences. He wanted each experience to make him better, not bitter. This time, dealing with Transverse Myelitis, he ended up writing a book, Medical Crisis, Lessons from a Hospital Bed. His conclusion....God wants a relationship with us and sometimes God sets us apart from our work for Him just to get us alone to commune with Him!

We adjusted to our new life with its physical limitations and realized that we could still travel and do ministry work, just at a slower pace. Then in June of 2016 Jim was diagnosed with





*he was their favorite patient, they loved him!*

*The last month at home with hospice was bitter-sweet. It was hard to see him lose his battle with cancer, but we did laugh a bit as he became quite the “princess patient” with all his requests that were immediately fulfilled. He was surrounded by those he loved and who cer-*

*tainly loved him in return.*

*melanoma. This was especially hard as he had been a regular patient of our dermatologist. It ended up the pathologist had missed finding Jim’s melanoma not once, but twice. By the time it was diagnosed it had spread and ultimately ended up in his brain. For the next seventeen months Jim battled the cancer. Through hospitalizations, surgeries, radiation treatments, and countless doctor visits Jim kept a positive attitude, kept teaching his Sunday School class (until the last few months), and made it his daily goal to make me laugh. He went so far as to take a goofy picture of himself in a baseball hat (he never wore a hat) and put it on my phone so that I would have to laugh whenever I went to use my phone. I watched him witness to every nurse, every doctor, every surgeon, and every tech that came into his hospital room. Again and again I heard them say*

*tainly loved him in return.*

*On February 5<sup>th</sup> at 5:25pm Jim left this earth and went to his heavenly home. I will miss him terribly but know that I will see him again. I also know that he is no longer suffering. He is with Jesus! He finished his race! He heard, “Well, done, thou good and faithful servant!” ♥*



## A FAMILY MAN

*Sentiments Shared on Jim's 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday  
May 1, 2013*

**Dad,**

*It seems time just continues to slip away and life continues to create busy work that keeps me from engaging in those things that are most important. We don't often share as much time together as I wish we could, and certainly living so far away doesn't help either. It's hard to believe I'm 34 and I'm sure it's even harder to believe you are 60. It seems not too long ago you were helping with college assignments and attempting to help me find the words that would soften those terrible mistakes I made in my youth. You may not realize the importance of your steady presence in my life, but in hindsight, I hope you can appreciate, as I do, just how constant and unchanging your character always was, has been, and I'm sure, will forever be. It seems so much in my life has changed through the years, yet when I peer into your life, I can always see a constant and unrelenting theme that revolves around your walk with Christ. I can't begin to describe how much that means to me. I*

*wish I could be more like you in so many ways. I hope you have a great 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday. We are all looking forward to seeing you soon. Love you Dad.*

**Matt ♥**

*Another year has gone by  
And another is yet to unfold  
God has purposed your every step  
And what the future holds  
So celebrate with joy and glad-  
ness*

*In all that God would do  
Knowing that through the future  
years,  
God's hand shall be upon you.*

*By  
M. S. Lowndes*

*Happy 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday!  
I love you so very much,  
Christine*

## A FAMILY MAN

### *Red Bellies and Wrestling* *May 1, 2013*

Jim, you have made so many impacts on who I am today, but I think the biggest impact was our wrestling and yes...red-bellies! Some may say “red-bellies and wrestling is that the best there was?” Yup! As I have found with Owen and Asa, boys crave the wrestling and full contact from their dad. It is crazy, rambunctious, out of control.....yet also bonding, therapeutic, and most importantly, loving. Sidetrack....From as early as I can remember, you showed love to us all. You were always holding mom’s hand, treating her with so much respect while making sure that we showed her that same respect (something I am striving to do with Nieka and teaching the boys as well). You raised us to know about God and His love and to carry those values with us in life, marriage and parenting.

Back to the red-belly point. As I said earlier, boys crave the wrestling stuff from their dads. You have always been that for me...a dad.

Granted, there is no “blood connection” but that never stopped you. You have shown me a father’s love that I needed without any hesitation. The red-bellies and wrestling, as crazy as it was and as much as mom cringed watching it, showed me love. Along

with the red-bellies, you have always been there for me in every step of my life, offering advice, counseling, direction, listening and always...showing love. Now that I am older and bigger I don’t need a red-belly and if we wrestled, one of us would throw our backs out! A simple hug will do, but the boys are fair game for all the red-belly loving that you want to show.

Happy Birthday old man and know that I love you and am so thankful that God blessed me with such a fantastic dad.

*Scott*





## ***MORE THAN JUST A FRIEND!***

**Rev. Lanny Carpenter**

**Lanny is the Pastor of Pee Dee SMC in Marion, SC  
and Bethesda SMC in Latta, SC  
and serves on the Board of Directors of  
Light of Life Ministry  
Nashville, TN**

Jim was more than just a friend to me. He was a mentor and a fellow traveler on this road of the Christian life. I first met Jim many years ago at Pastors' Schools and General Conferences. We were both young ministers then, ready to set the world on fire. We shared a kinship immediately, and would often spend time together when we saw each other. But, as sometimes happens, life intervened, and we soon lost contact. Neither of us had any idea it would be about 30 years before we saw each other or spoke again.

Like all pastors, I received the information first sent out in 2007 concerning Jim's ministry, and that he would be at each of the Annual Conferences. Instantly, the thought flashed through my mind: *I wonder if Jim could use another writer?* I told my wife that I would love to write, and that I was going to ask him about it. I saw Jim on the first day of the Eastern Annual Conference, and we renewed our friendship. I told him I wanted to talk to him whenever we had a break. When we spoke, I asked him if he needed a writer for his ministry. I remember he looked at me in a funny way, but said that he could use someone. I found out later that he had sent a mailing earlier that week asking for writers, and when I asked, he wondered how I had found out! But I was not even on his mailing list! We agreed it was God bringing us together.

We agreed to get together in his

home in Nashville in August of that year. It was then I met his lovely wife, Barbara, and she became an instant friend. My conversation with Jim was startling, to say the least. It was like looking at our lives in a mirror! Our lives and theology had run parallel courses, until finally God brought us together again. He hired me for \$1 a year to be a writer and teacher (yes, you read that correctly!) Later I would join the Board of Light of Life Ministry. He also found out I had written a short story that won an internet contest, which excited him. He had an idea for a short novel, but could not seem to write it. There, *Six Hours to Eternity* was born!

I accepted some writing assignments from him, co-authoring *Building on the Foundation* and *A Study of the Christ*. I wrote several articles for the *Illuminator* newsletter, and finally authored my own book. We talked often, and got together every chance we had. On one occasion, he and Barbara hosted me, my wife, and our two youngest girls. The bond he had with my daughters was a bond they will never forget, especially the endless joking and horsing around!

What I loved about Jim most was his dreams and visions for the ministry that God gave him. Many times he would call me after some meeting he had just attended. "You got some time to talk?" he would ask. He then would proceed to tell me some new idea God had laid on his heart. I was there for



the birth of the idea for The Wesley Institutes, and together we worked to make it a reality.

Jim will forever be a part of my life, a memory which will inspire me in my writing as well as my life. My desire is to see the ministry to which he gave his life continue successfully. He often told me, "Lanny, I want this ministry to outlive me!" It will, however, never outlive his memory, and it will continue the work God has called it into existence to do! I miss you, my brother! ♥

## The Blessing

### PSALM 119:105

**Thy word is  
a lamp unto  
my feet and  
a light unto  
my path.**

#### NOTE:

This was written after studying the book, *The Blessing*, by John Trent and Gary Smalley.

I selected a verse, Psalm 119:105, and a symbol, a lighthouse, to represent the blessing Jim is to me and to others. He is a constant source of wisdom and understanding always given with humor and love.

Jim,

You are like a lighthouse on a rocky New England shore. You are always there, day or night; during fair weather or during storms. Your light shines forth with wisdom, understanding, and humor. You guide me and our children with Godly advice so that we enter the harbor of home safely knowing we are loved unconditionally.

I love you,

Barbara





## Jim Jones, My Friend

*By Jack Davis  
Long-time Friend and Board  
Chairman  
Pastor, First SMC, Nashville*

As the only Southern Methodist student at Free Will Baptist Bible College for a couple of years, I was delighted to learn, as I registered for classes in the fall of 1977, that there was another Southern Methodist enrolling. That “other” Southern Methodist was James O. Jones, Jr. I do not recall the circumstances of our initial meeting, nor could I have anticipated the impact that meeting was going to have on my life.

Jim and I became friends very quickly. Over the course of the next forty years, that friendship grew into a very special relationship. I discovered early on that Jim Jones was a true brother in Christ. His faith in Jesus and trust in God was lived out in the everyday experiences of life, both the good ones and the not so good ones. I knew him long enough to see his theology change as he discovered a new truth, but never once was there any sign that his faith in God was shaken or compromised in the least.

As a brother in Christ, we served together

as co-laborers in the Lord’s work. Early on, this involved youth work and summer camp. He had a special way with the campers in those days. Then for a time we were both pastors in the Nashville area frequently working on projects together. After Jim left the pastoral ministry, he and Barbara started attending the church I pastor. But Jim was never a pew warmer. He was actively involved in the work there, teaching multiple classes through the years. More recently, I have had the honor of serving with him as Chairman of the Board for Light of Life Ministry which he founded and directed until his passing. In each of these works Jim always proved himself to be a caring and capable leader from whom I learned much.

It was easy to learn from Jim Jones. At his core, he was a teacher. I have never known anyone who enjoyed sharing the truth of God’s word more. He had an insatiable desire to know God and to understand the Scriptures. But equal to that was his desire to make God known. He was



often frustrated by professing Christians who had no hunger for God's word, but took great pleasure in helping the hungering seeker understand God's truth. Many of us are more biblically and theologically literate because we had the opportunity to learn through his teaching.

Jim also served as my counselor on many occasions. Whether it was a personal concern or a ministry issue, I could always depend on his wisdom to help make sure my thinking was not out of line. His advice always made me feel more secure in making decisions and probably kept me out of "hot water" numerous times.

Jim loved to travel, and I had the privilege of making several trips with him. Our families vacationed together in 1996 on a tour of the western US, covering some 6700 miles in nineteen days. In 2007, we celebrated our wedding anniver-

saries with a trip to Hawaii. Then in 2010, we made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land as Jim led a tour of Israel.

Jim Jones filled many roles in my life: brother in Christ, co-laborer, teacher, counselor, and travel guide. While those roles frequently overlapped, there is one role that tied them all together. He was always a friend. He was a friend who loved me unconditionally. He was the best friend I have ever had. And I loved him in return.

My life is richer, and I am a better man because God brought James O. Jones, Jr. into my life in a class room at Free Will Baptist Bible College. I don't know how it was that God brought Jim Jones into your life, but I suspect that your life is also richer, and that you are a better person for having been exposed to his witness. ♥





**JIM JONES, A MAN OF VISION**  
**Rev. Gary Briden**  
**Executive Director of the**  
**Association of Independent Methodist (AIM)**  
**and**  
**Board Member of Light of Life Ministry**

I first met Jim and Barbara in May 2006 when I made my first trip to speak at FSMC in Nashville, TN as President of Southern Methodist College. Christina Keaton had just died and Jack's house was full with his family. Jack said that he had a couple in the church who had opened their home to me – that I would like them – and that they would make me comfortable. He was sooo right. Jim and I instantly clicked and Jim and Barbara have become very close friends to Debi and me. A 12-year friendship has seemed as close as a life-long friendship.

During our 12-year friendship I was often on the road traveling to meet with pastors and churches either for Southern Methodist College or The Association of Independent Methodists. I would often pick up the phone while driving and call Jim... often just to say hello and see what he had going on, sometimes to share an idea with him to get his input, and sometimes just to share some good news that I may have had that day. On a few occasions, it was to talk with him just to keep awake. Talking with him always woke me up...often because of his teasing or jokes we would tell. We had a two- way street when it came to teasing each other. At least two or three times after his homegoing, I have reached for that phone only to remind myself that cell service won't reach Heaven.

At our first meeting over that May 2006 weekend, Jim began to talk of his vision of discipleship. It was a bold vision that called for development of curriculum specifically designed to be used in Wesleyan/Arminian circles and designed to be used by and taught to laymen and pastors alike.

From that vision came Light of Life Ministry. Within 2 years, I saw that it was something that Southern Methodist College and LOLM could unite in and help the people we were both trying to reach. From those discussions came the idea of incorporating The Wesley Institute with the extension program of SMC and the course of study for S.M. pastors. From that time until 2012, Jim and I worked together from our prospective ministries to spread the program. It has also been found useful in other groups for discipleship training, doctrinal instruction, practical aspects of ministry and service for Christ.

When I became Executive Director of the Association of Independent Methodists in 2012, I introduced Jim and Light of Life Ministry to AIM. They quickly embraced Jim, his vision, and his ministry. Some instituted the Wesley Institute as part of their ministry and discipleship program.

They appreciated and loved Jim to the extent that:

- ◆ They were touched deeply when they learned how sick he was
- ◆ They were troubled when they thought that LOLM and the W.I. might not go on
- ◆ They sent me several texts and phone calls to have me let Barbara and the family know that they were praying for them and his funeral service. Jim touched a younger generation of preachers with his message and ministry in more than one group.

When I asked Barbara if Jim had a favorite text, she said that he had so many that he loved that she could not think of just one. Later that day, when I



ley said that this experience could happen at or after conversion or just before death. Jim believed that he was experiencing it as he was approaching death. I believe he was too. I Corinthians 13 describes the result of this experience in the believer's life. It was the prayer of Paul's for the believers in Thessalonica recorded in I Thessalonians 5:23,24 that is seen in I Corinthians 13. To know His perfect love and to be conformed to the image of Christ in this life is what God desires for each of us.

Jim always wanted to go deep into the Word and digest the simple and deep truths of Scrip-

got back to Jack Davis' house she sent a text and called saying that I Corinthians 13 was one of his favorites passages and that: "That is Jim to me". And .... IT IS!

ture into his heart, mind, and soul. He was solid in his faith and yet very practical in his approach and ministry.

I Corinthians 13 is a description of Jesus AND of someone who knows His Perfect Love. That does fit Jim.

He was all of this, and full of fun too. ♥

The nurse who took care of Jim as he was awaking from anesthesia after his brain surgery came to Barbara to tell her that he was praying as he was awakening and that he was calling people by name and praying for specific needs.

After Jim came home he told her that he had had an experience with the Lord during that time – that he knew what John Wesley was talking about when he described God's Perfect Love and Entire Sanctification. He said he knew before hand that he was saved, cleansed, and forgiven but now he had a deeper love for Christ. He remembered that Wes-





## *Sharing With a Million People?*

*Dr. Vic Reasoner*

*President of Southern Methodist College*

*Orangeburg, SC*

*Pastor of Leesville SMC*

*Laurens, SC*

I met Jim Jones about ten years ago. We became close friends and he was a great encouragement to me. Only at his funeral did I realize the extent to which he encouraged everyone and was everyone's friend. Like Barnabas, Jim was a good man, full of faith and the Holy Spirit (Acts 11:24) and a great number of people were brought to the Lord.

Jim had a tremendous vision. I remember when he declared that he was asking God to help him share the Gospel with a million people.

Jim and I were part of a ministry team that was going to the Philippines. The plan was for everyone on the team to rendezvous at LAX on May 19, 2015. But Jim never came. Gary Briden explained to us that Jim had experienced an adverse reaction to his immunization shots. For almost three years Jim battled with the domino effect of declining health.

When word came that he had left us for heaven, my first thought was, What about those mil-

lion people that Jim wanted to influence for Christ? Eventually, I began to link my unanswered question with the biblical doctrine of imputation. If God imputes inordinate lust as adultery and if God records hatred as murder, does it not follow that a godly man can have a passion to advance the Kingdom of Christ and God imputes a million souls to his account?

But the end is not yet. A pebble may drop from our sight and yet it has set in motion a series of ever-widening ripples. This world has not heard the last from Jim Jones. His heart still beats through Light of Life Ministry and before the final day of judgment, Jim may actually impact a million souls.



It was said of Abel that he continued to speak although he was dead (Heb 11:4). God gave Jim a heart for humanity. And Jim had a message that he wanted to share with the whole world. I believe that when God opens the books and hands out His rewards, Jim will have surpassed his goal. ♥



## A EULOGY

### *Thoughts Shared at Jim's Funeral By David Shumate Friend and LCLM Board Member*

amazing person he was. And I will attempt to do that, even though Jim told me not to talk about HIM. We will celebrate today the life Jim had here on earth, but today we will also be celebrating the fact of where Jim will spend eternity!!!

Barbara just recently made the statement that she was so, so blessed that Jim chose her, and as his friend, I to feel so blessed that he chose to have a FRIENDSHIP with me. So many others gathered here today can say the same.

But you know, the reason we were blessed that Jim chose all of us is because before he chose us, Jim chose to follow Jesus and that choice made him the man he was.

He was very loving husband, father, and grandfather. With his other family, his parents and sisters and others, he was the anchor; he was that person all could depend on. And as a friend, that friendship with Jim, well that was beyond what words can describe. Jim would listen, he cared, and gave sound advice and normally it was accompanied with a scripture or two.

He was, for sure, one of the most intelligent and one of the most selfless people you could ever meet! Barbara was not the only LOVE of Jim's

I'm here to share with you some things about James Oliver Jones, Jr. and his life and the

life. Jim was also passionate and had a love for basketball, photography, traveling... and I'm blessed we've been able to do that together a few times, and FOOD ...the man loved to eat...and especially ice cream or banana pudding.

But on December 29, 2017, I went to the hospital to visit Jim... there was Jack (Jim's longest and closest friend and my brother-in-law.; Jack is also our pastor.). Jack was talking with a couple visiting Jim. As they stepped out into the hallway ... I started talking to Jim...Jim's mouth seemed parched so I gave him a drink of water, as he smiled. He quickly went to the statement that he and Jack were discussing the plans and arrangements for his funeral. I felt my eyes swelling with tears.... a lump in my throat.... and an emptiness inside. He continues, "David, I want you to bring the eulogy." My response was, "YOU, my friend, are on some very strong drugs ... Me, why me?" He chuckled... He said he wanted it to be about our friendship and our relationship with Jesus and all he had done there.

I know Jim did not consider himself a good church pastor; he said that was not his best gift. He said that many times, but I'm here to tell you he was the pastor that I needed at that time. About 1990, Jim was the pastor of Andrews Chapel Southern Methodist Church. During this time, it seemed as if he was pursuing me. He was everywhere! He was at the hardware, when I bought gas, and even the grocery store. It seemed like everywhere I turned, there he was. He visited me at my house from time to time, until he got me there at church. See I was under conviction and he knew it. I was saved but not walking with the Lord. Jim guided

me back to the cross and God's forgiveness and grace. Jim taught me so much!!!

Jim always thought that he was more equipped by God to teach, and he proved that to be true over the years. This is never been more true, than the recent years when Jim, with Barbara by his side, founded the Light of Life ministries. I know several of us gathered in this room today believe that this ministry will live for many, many years to come and we all know that has and would be the desire of Jim's heart.

You all know Jim loved to have a good time, if it was playing games, cards, or a social event. He made everyone feel special, and as he loved to just have fun, people were just drawn to him. He enjoyed being with others and making them laugh and putting a smile on other faces.

But in his ministry, he was serious, He ALWAYS wanted it to be about God / Jesus!!! He wanted you and me to learn how to walk beside Jesus daily and have a TRUE and REAL relationship with Christ. He wanted us to learn to walk this life, Spirit-filled daily, as we are promised in God's word. With LOLM it opened the door for him to reach so many more lost and misguided souls and continue the education of Christians in their walk with the Lord. If you knew Jim, you know this is true.

Jim was that guy that when a stranger knocked on the door to sell him something, or maybe thinking they were going to witness to him, he invited them on in. He would have them sitting on the sofa and sharing and teaching them the word of God. You will find in the Bible in the book of Romans 12 that a Christian is called to be a living sacrifice for GOD; well Jim was a living example of just that.

That is made apparent by the statement a young man told me recently. I see 3 levels of people: 1st is the average person just trying to get by; 2nd is good people trying to make good choices; 3rd is the spiritual people that

are pastors, ministers and missionaries; and next is Jim and Barbara Jones .... Saints, at the feet of Jesus. They are amazing!

Someone else said that Jim always loved to find the pieces to the puzzle... AND NOW...Jim is on another journey to complete the puzzle.

There are many others. Barbara has told us how so many have shared with her, by emails cards and letters about the difference Jim made in their lives and how special of a person he was to them. Those things have meant so much to Barbara and the children. They have felt your love.

Well, did I share what Jim wanted? I don't know. But if you got the impression that when you spent time with Jim Jones you had spent time with a godly man that lived a Christ-centered life and wanted you to know that the choice to follow Jesus is the most important thing in life., then I guess I did.

I will close here by saying I would imagine that when Jim got to Heaven he heard these words... Well done My Good a faithful servant! You fought a good fight...you have finished the race and You kept the Faith!



## The Wesley Institute of Bible and Ministry Training

The question that is asked perhaps more than any other concerning The Wesley Institute program is this: “**Why do I need it?**” Could I request that you read the heading of this section once again? So what is being asked is simply, “**Why do I need Bible and ministry training?**”

Well, let’s see. The majority of committed Christians attend Church at least once a week - usually on Sunday mornings, but depending on work and church scheduling, not always. So let’s assume that at least 30 minutes is given to the actual Bible message. A smaller percentage attend Sunday School, but those that do will again,



For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food.

Hebrews 5:12 NKJV

on average, get about an additional 30 minutes of an actual Bible lesson. Many churches have discontinued Sunday evening worship, but if you attend a church that has an evening program, let’s assume you will get another 30 minutes of actual Bible instruction here also. Most churches have some mid-week programming, but these are not always Bible centered. Perhaps this time is spent in prayer - a good endeavor and worthwhile to say the least, but not directly Bible or ministry training. So if you are a very faithful and conscientious Church member attending every activity the church offers you may be getting upwards to 1.5 to 2.0 hours per week in varied Bible instruction.

I say varied because in most cases the Sunday School, morning worship, evening program, and mid-week service have little to do with one another. In the majority of cases you are getting small tidbits of truth (if you have a good Bible teacher as pastor or SS teacher) that are unrelated to the other little tidbits you receive. But let’s be honest, the majority of believers are getting no more than an hour per week of actual Bible instruction. And this instruction is often not understood or properly applied to life, perhaps the result of poor teaching but more likely due to a lack of a good Bible foundation on the part of the listener.

Would you like to hazard a guess as to the percentage of believers who actually do self study at home? I am not speaking of a devotional Bible reading, but actual Bible study. The best conclusion is less than 10% - even in evangelical circles. And the reason why more do not is simply that they do not under-

stand what they are reading and become frustrated in their efforts. So it can be easily seen that the majority of those claiming the name of Christ spend no more than an hour or two per week in an real effort to

***“grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord.”***

Now compare the time spent in pursuit of Bible and ministry training to those spent in various forms of entertainment - sports, television, social media, Internet surfing, and any number of electronic games. It has been revealed in polls that people in general spend 30 to 50 hours per week pursuing various forms of entertainment, and in most cases this after spending 30 to 50 hours at work in an often worldly and hostile environment to Christians. That means that the average Christian may be spending 60 to 100 hours per week in an environment that is primarily a product of the world compared to just a couple of hours per week seeking after the things of God.

Now look at the question again! Why indeed does the Church need a program of doctrinally conservative, theologically consistent, progressively organized Bible and ministry training such as is found in The Wesley Institute? The answer should be obvious. Yet the most common ‘reason’ that is given for not taking advantage of such an opportunity is a “lack of time.” What amount of time does the Wesley Institute program ask per week? In most cases just three hours per week for both out of class

**Be diligent  
(Study in KJV)  
to present yourself  
approved to God, a  
worker who  
does not need  
to be ashamed,  
rightly dividing the  
word of truth.**

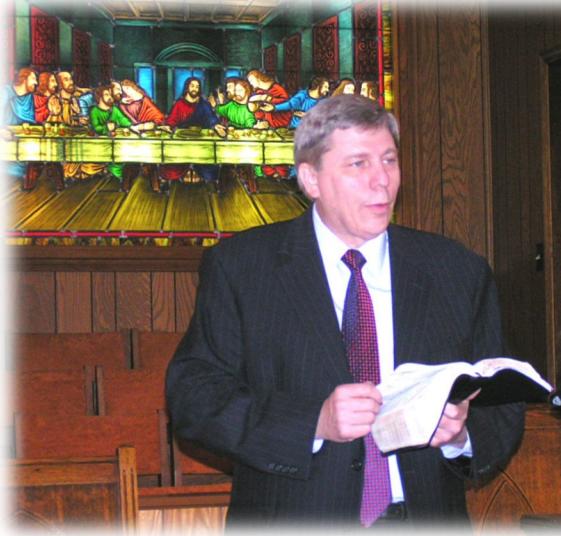
**2 Timothy 2:15 NKJV**



reading and in class study.

I wish everyone had a desire for knowledge, especially the knowledge of God’s Word! As a teacher that would certainly make for a dream come true. And while lack of time is most often an excuse and not a reason, I know that there are legitimate reasons why some cannot participate in such a program. But I also know for a certainty that everyone who will stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ must give an account of their actions, their works, and even their words. The excuse of “I didn’t know” will not stand up there, especially if you neglect to be a good steward of your time by not taking advantage of the opportunities where you could have learned.

This spring and summer I will be contacting many of you, both pastors and laity, with the opportunity to offer The Wesley Institute to the people in your church, and even to those in your communities if you so desire to use it as an outreach tool. I hope you will consider the benefits it provides and say “Yes.”



## Jim Jones on the Easter Event

*blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.” (Titus 2:12b-13)*

**A**s the old saying goes, there are always two sides to every story. The same is true for the Gospel. There is the view of the world and the view of the redeemed. It is

**The Cross** - *“foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.” (1 Corinthians 1:18)*

**The Crucifixion** - *“to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.” (1 Corinthians 1:23-24)*

**The Resurrection** - *“and when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked...” (Acts 17:32a) But if we have been united together in the likeness of his death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of his resurrection.” (Romans 6:5)*

**The Second Coming** - *“...scoffers will come... saying, where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation. (2 Peter 3:3-4) “... we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the*

during this season, the time of the death and resurrection of our Lord, that these varying views are seen even more clearly than usual. For those of the world this is simply a time for hunting Easter eggs and eating chocolate bunnies. But for those who have placed their faith in the risen Savior, it is the time of quiet reflection on His substitutionary death, a time of exuberant joy at His bodily resurrection, and a time of glorious expectation for His coming again!

*O that old rugged cross, so despised by the world, has a wondrous attraction for me; for the dear Lamb of God left His glory above to bear it to dark Calvary. So I'll cherish the old rugged cross, till my trophies at last I lay down; I will cling to the old rugged cross, and exchange it some day for a crown.*

**Even so, come Lord Jesus!**



# Did Jesus Christ Physically Arise from the Dead Never to Die Again?

## *Why is this question important?*

This question will reveal one's position on who is Lord...Jesus or self! Without the physical resurrection of Christ, the entire system of Christian thought would be invalid, and one is free to make himself lord. The resurrection of Christ assures us of His claims to be the Son of God and confirms His promises to the disciples that on the third day, he would rise again:

*So the Jews answered and said to Him, "What sign do You show to us, since You do these things?" Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." Then the Jews said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?" But He was speaking of the temple of His body. Therefore, when He had risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this to them; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said. (John 2:18-22 NKJV)*

It also assures us that the atonement of the cross will be applied to those who believe:

*Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification. (Romans 4:23-25 NKJV)*

Finally, the bodily resurrection of Christ assures us of our own bodily resurrection:

*Now if Christ is preached that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty. Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up—if in fact the dead do not rise. For if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins! Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in this life only we*

*have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable. (I Corinthians 15: 12-19 NKJV)*

## *What does one's answer to this question reveal about his/her doctrinal position?*

Since the physical resurrection of Jesus Christ is the crowning event of history, for one to deny this truth is to totally reject divine revelation, the power of God, and the only hope for the redemption of man. It is impossible to deny this event and be saved, for as Paul stated in I Corinthians 15:17:

*And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins!*

## *How does a "no" answer affect sound doctrine?*

An answer of "no" to this question will totally destroy any hope of sound doctrine. To deny the physical resurrection of Jesus is heresy to the last degree! The Bible leaves no room for salvation apart from believing in Christ's resurrection:

*"...that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. (Romans 10: 9-10 NKJV)*

**Author's Note:** This study is designed for Christians or those seeking Christ. It is not written in an effort to convince the world of the reality of Christ's resurrection. But for believers there is proof of the resurrection. The tomb was empty. He appeared to the women at the tomb. He appeared to His disciples on various occasions. He told Thomas to touch Him. He ate with the disciples by the Sea of Galilee. Before His ascension He appeared to more than five hundred followers at once, which was witnessed by His disciples. It is not for the lack of proof one chooses not to believe - but the lack of faith. ♥

# Jesus

I am the way,  
I am the truth,  
I am the life:

*No man cometh  
unto the Father,  
but by me.*

John 14:6

## Contact Information

Ministry Address:  
**Light of Life Ministry**  
**P. O. Box 50792**  
**Nashville, TN 37205-0792**

Director:

**Dan Shapley**

Phone Numbers:

**Ministry # 615-662-8168**

**Cell # 615-681-1971**

Email:

**[bjones@lolministry.org](mailto:bjones@lolministry.org)**

**[revdans@gmail.com](mailto:revdans@gmail.com)**

Web-site (now under Re-construction):

**[www.lolministry.org](http://www.lolministry.org)**



**Light of Life  
Ministry**

c/o Dan Shapley  
P. O. Box 50792  
Nashville, TN 37205-0792

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