

*In Loving
Memory of*
James "Jim" Smith

Sunrise: June 3, 1944

Sunset: October 4, 2025

"The most important thing in the world is family and love."

— John Wooden

Order Of Service

Celebration of Life & Repast

Friday, October 24, 11:00 am

Figueroa Church of Christ 455 W. 57th St. Los Angeles, CA 90037

Processional Hymn/Selection

"I Shall Wear a Golden Crown" – Northside Church of Christ Praise and Worship Team

Opening Prayer

Presented by: Minister Lionel Sims, Northside Church of Christ

Welcome

Presented by: Jondolon Bush, Master of Ceremony

Scripture Readings

Old Testament – Stanley McGhee, Psalms 23

New Testament – Greg McGhee, John 14: 1-6

Prayer of Comfort

Offered by: Minister Vincent Hawkins, Figueroa Church of Christ

Hymn/Selection

"Let It Rise" – Northside Church of Christ Praise and Worship Team

Acknowledgments & Cards

Presented by: Delores Ridgeway

Resolutions/Proclamations

Presented by: Christine Bush

Reflections/Remarks

Post Office Colleagues and Friends Tribute - Carl Poingsett

Adopted Children Tribute - Nadra Montgomery

Neighborhood Friends & Family Tribute - Monya Hayes

Church Friends & Family Tribute - Bonnie Major and Andrea Major

Family Tribute - Felica Coney

Formal Reading of Obituary

(Printed on pages 4 and 5)

Presented by: Trenekia Gilmore

A Celebration of Life

Video Presentation

Hymn/Selection

"Bow Down" – Northside Church of Christ Praise and Worship Team

Eulogy/Message of Hope

Delivered by: Minister Vince Holmes, Zion Temple Community Church

Hymn/Selection

"My God is Awesome" – Northside Church of Christ Praise and Worship Team

Benediction & Blessing of the Food

Benjamin Major

Recessional Hymn/Selection

"Mansion, Robe and Crown" – Northside Church of Christ Praise and Worship Team

Internment

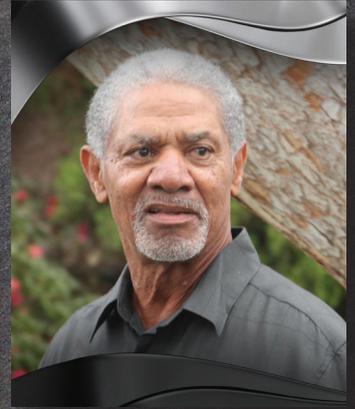
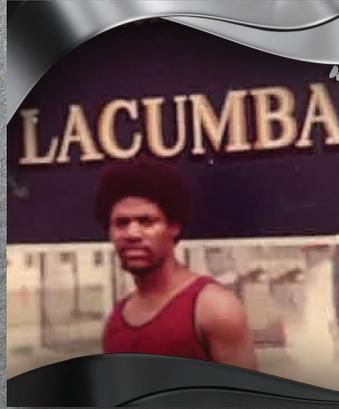
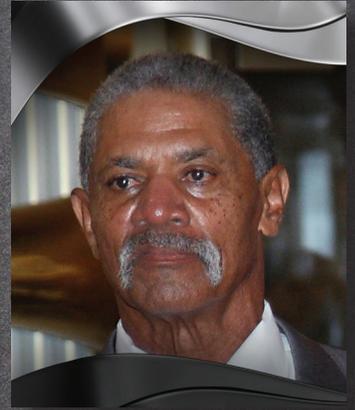
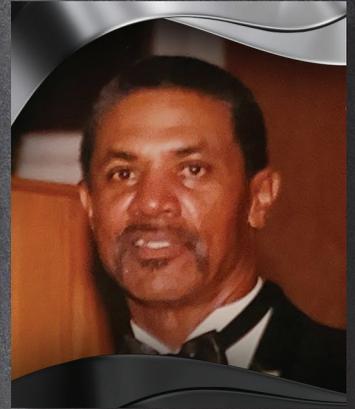
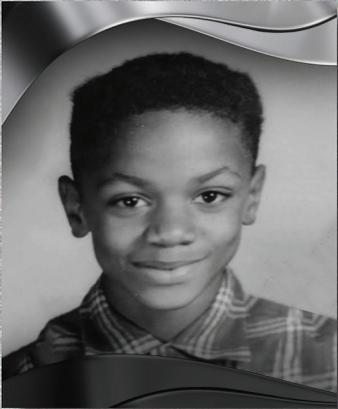
Monday, October 27, 12:45 pm

Riverside National Cemetery 22495 Van Buren Blvd.

Riverside CA 92518

... from childhood to manhood

“From a playful boy to a steadfast man—
his journey was one of purpose, laughter, and love.”



Obituary

James "Jim" Smith was born on June 3, 1944, in Madison Parish, near Delhi, Louisiana, to Charlie M. and Belle Gardner Smith. The fifth of twelve children, he grew up surrounded by the love and laughter of a large, close-knit family.

Jim attended Esther Tombs School throughout his formative and high school years. During this time, he was known for his playful and energetic spirit. He enjoyed playing basketball and baseball on the school teams and spending time outdoors. When he wasn't working alongside his family in the fields—picking cotton and helping with other farm chores—he could often be found laughing, affectionately teasing, and playing with his siblings.

It was during this time that Jim was baptized in Bayou Macon while faithfully attending Mt. Zion Baptist Church, beginning his lifelong journey of faith. After graduating high school, he planned to move to Los Angeles, but his father had other plans. He had arranged for Jim to become the first of his children to attend college, enrolling him at Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. As the dutiful son he was, Jim followed his father's wishes and spent the next five years completing his coursework. Just before finishing, his life took a new turn when he was drafted into the United States Army which prevented him from earning his bachelor's degree.

Sergeant James Smith honorably served in the United States Army, answering his nation's call to duty through the Selective Service System in Rayville, Louisiana. He entered active service in February 1970, beginning his military journey with nine weeks of intensive training at Fort Polk, Louisiana. Through hard work, dedication, and leadership, he rose to the rank of Sergeant (E-5)—a respected noncommissioned officer role that reflected both technical expertise and the ability to lead and mentor fellow soldiers.

During his service, Sergeant Smith demonstrated exceptional proficiency as an infantryman, earning Expert Marksmanship Qualifications with both the M-16 rifle and the M-60 machine gun. He completed an overseas tour in Vietnam, earning one Overseas Bar for his service. His honorable duty was recognized through several military awards, including the National Defense Service Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal, and the Vietnam Campaign Medal—each representing his courage, commitment, and faithful service to his country.

After completing his active duty, Sergeant Smith transferred to the U.S. Army Reserve at Fort Riley, Kansas, where he continued to uphold the Army's core values of loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, and personal courage until his honorable discharge in October 1971.

Shortly after leaving the military, Jim was united in marriage to his beloved wife, Claudyia, on October 30, 1971—just ten days after his discharge. Their early years of marriage were filled with laughter, family gatherings, and cherished memories with friends. From their love came three beautiful daughters:

Michelle, Candra, and Jaterica. Jim's family was the joy of his life. He often shared stories of his daughters' accomplishments, his pride shining through in every conversation.

Following his military service, James began a long and distinguished career with the United States Postal Service, where he worked faithfully for 38 years.

Obituary

His colleagues knew him as “Smitty” and often referred to him as “Easy Money”, a nickname he used to greet other fellow postal employees and acquaintances he knew from his route and around the neighborhood. Known for his reliability, friendly spirit, and strong work ethic, he became a familiar and beloved face in the community he lived in and served.

Outside of work, Jim was an avid sports enthusiast who loved both watching and playing. He competed in a city baseball league, participated in Post Office softball and basketball leagues, and was an active member of a local bowling league. His love for laughter, dancing, and good company made him the life of any gathering.

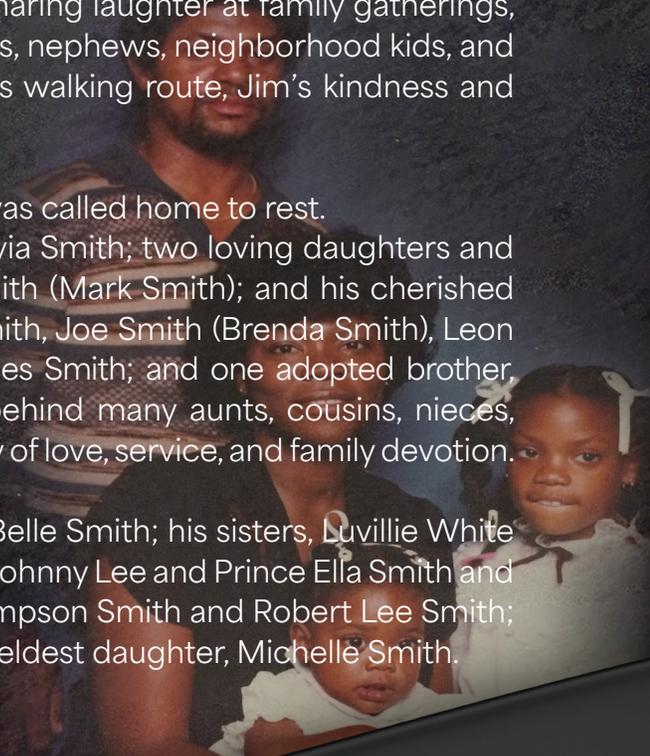
After retiring in 2011, Jim continued to live life with energy and joy. He enjoyed walking through his neighborhood—often covering more than four miles a day—and made a daily ritual of walking to the store twice a day to play his favorite lottery numbers.

A proud family man, Jim cherished every moment spent with his wife and daughters. He was always ready with a smile, a story, or a helping hand. During summer months, he looked forward to traveling back home to Delhi, Louisiana to visit family, attend biennial family and school reunions and reconnect with his roots.

Those who knew Jim remember him as easygoing, friendly, and compassionate—someone who was always willing to lend a helping hand to family, friends, and neighbors alike. Many will also remember his infamous look which had multiple meanings for those especially close to him. Whether enjoying a cold drink after a long day, sharing laughter at family gatherings, visiting with neighbors, looking after and mentoring nieces, nephews, neighborhood kids, and adopted sons and daughters or greeting others along his walking route, Jim’s kindness and good nature left a lasting impression on everyone he met.

On October 4, 2025, at the age of 81, James “Jim” Smith was called home to rest. He leaves to cherish his memory his devoted wife, Claudyia Smith; two loving daughters and their spouses, Candra Loftis (Trey Loftis) and Jaterica Smith (Mark Smith); and his cherished brothers, sisters and in-laws: George White, Ernestine Smith, Joe Smith (Brenda Smith), Leon Smith (Joann Smith), Viola Young, Etta B. Smith, and Charles Smith; and one adopted brother, Jesse Washington (Nellie Washington). He also leaves behind many aunts, cousins, nieces, nephews, and friends who will continue to honor his legacy of love, service, and family devotion.

Jim was preceded in death by his parents, C. M. and Belle Smith; his sisters, Luvillie White and Dorothy Smith; his brothers and sisters-in-law, Johnny Lee and Prince Ella Smith and Jesse and Johnnie Mae Smith; his brothers, Sampson Smith and Robert Lee Smith; his brother-in-law, Leroy Young; and by his eldest daughter, Michelle Smith.



... *a husband*

"Our love story has no ending; it simply changes chapters."



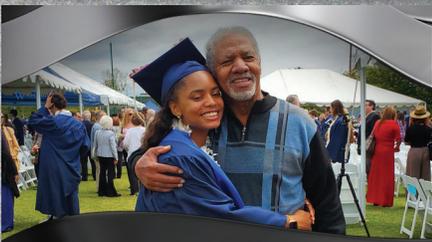
... *a father*

"You taught us how to live, how to love, and how to stand tall in the face of life. Forever our hero, always our dad."



... a son, brother, uncle, friend, and neighbor

“He may be gone from our sight, but the warmth of his love will forever surround his family and friends.”



Active Pallbearers

Derrick Smith • Marcus Smith • Myron Smith
Jeffrey Brown • Chevin Young • Christopher McGhee

Honorary Pallbearers

Joe Smith • Leon Smith • Charles Smith • Tony Smith
Traveon Loftis • Mark Smith

Acknowledgments

The family of James "Jim" Smith wishes to express our heartfelt appreciation to each of you – family, friends, church members, neighbors, and colleagues – for the outpouring of love and kindness shown during this difficult time. Your cards, food, plants, gifts, scholarship donations, words of encouragement, phone calls, texts, emails, home and hospital visits, prayers, and presence have brought us comfort beyond measure. Whether you offered your time, lent a helping hand, or simply shared in our sorrow, please know that every gesture has been felt deeply and remembered with gratitude.

We extend special thanks to Figueroa Church of Christ and Northside Church of Christ for their steadfast love, availability, and spiritual support. Your prayers, guidance, and presence have truly strengthened us and helped carry us through.

Our sincere appreciation also goes to Charles Smith, whose care, devotion, and tireless support during the last few weeks reflect the very heart of family. Your compassion and service will never be forgotten.

To our Atkinson Avenue neighborhood family, especially the Hayes and Vasquez families, we are profoundly grateful for surrounding us with love, care, and community. Your kindness turned difficult days into moments of comfort.

As we continue to navigate life without his physical presence, we ask for your continued prayers and support. The love you have shown reminds us that we are not alone and that his legacy of kindness and family lives on through all of us.

With deepest gratitude and love,
Claudia, Candra and Jaterica

The Smith/Loftis Family Memorial Scholarship Fund - Honoring the Life and Legacy of James "Jim" Smith

For families who wish to contribute, donations may be made in lieu of flowers to the The Smith/Loftis Family Memorial Scholarship Fund - Honoring the Life and Legacy of James "Jim" Smith through the Southern Foundation. This fund honors his legacy by supporting future generations of Southern University students in their pursuit of higher education. To make a donation, please visit <https://foundation.sus.edu/james-smith-endowment-for-student-scholarships/>.

**Services Entrusted To: C. L. Lynch Mortuary Inc.
22939 Hawthorne Blvd. Suite 210 Torrance, California 90505
310-373-1222**