

Celebrating THE LIFE OF



***The family would like to
thank Dad's care team at
Baptist Health the past
month, especially Dr. B.K.
Singh and Reagan Muse.***



JAMES DONALD GAITHER

December 18, 1946 ~ June 27, 2026



www.SmithFamilyCares.com

In Loving Memory of James Donald Gaither

BORN

December 18, 1946
Morrilton, Arkansas

PASSED AWAY

JUNE 27, 2026
Little Rock, Arkansas

VISITATION

1:30 – 3:00 PM Wednesday, July 1, 2026
First Baptist Church, Selph Hall
Benton, Arkansas

OFFICIATING

Pastor Clay Cunningham

love

For God so loved the
world that He gave
his one and only Son,
that whoever believes
in him shall not perish
but have eternal life.

John 3:16

James Donald Gaither

James Donald Gaither, 79, passed away peacefully at Hospice Home Care on Saturday, June 27, 2026.

James was born in Morrilton, Arkansas on December 18, 1946, to R.L. Gaither and Geneva "Judy" Mitchell Gaither. He graduated from Benton High School and later attended Ouachita Baptist University where he met Rebecca Jo Chandler, to whom he would be married for 52 years.

Upon graduation from OBU, James served in the United States Army and spent three years stationed in Colorado Springs. After leaving the Army, James began a job licensing billboards at the Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department. A hard worker, consistent, and loyal, he completed his 30-year career with AHTD as the head of the Right-of-Way Division when he retired in 2004. Always good with his hands, a craftsman, and all-around "Mr. Fix-It," James spent his post-retirement years as an avid volunteer for Habitat for Humanity of Saline County, where he enjoyed camaraderie and fellowship with fellow volunteers while building safe and affordable housing for local families.

James and Becky made their home in the Salem area of Benton, where they were members of First Baptist Church, and James served as a deacon for many years. There, they raised a daughter and twin sons– Marsha, Michael, and Mitchell. Those three children gave James and Becky six grandchildren who lovingly referred to James as "Peeps." He was his grandchildren's biggest fan, driving many miles and hours to attend countless baseball, softball, basketball, soccer, and volleyball games, cross country and track meets, and vocal performances. He was a consistent presence in whatever venue his grandchildren were performing, and they could always count on encouraging words from Peeps for themselves and their teammates, as well as the occasional admonishment for a wayward referee or inattentive scorekeeper.

James is preceded in death by his parents, R.L. and Judy Gaither, and his beloved wife, Rebecca Jo Chandler Gaither. He is survived by his children, Marsha Gaither Saul (William), of DeValls Bluff; Mitchell (Paige) and Michael (Jill), both of Benton; six grandchildren, Chander (22) and Lane (18) Saul, Jillian (18) and Caroline (15) Gaither, and Ross (13) and Reid (10) Gaither; his siblings, Raymond "Lucky" Gaither (Pat), of Oregon; Susie Cox (Robert), of Benton; Bill Gaither (Terri), of Bella Vista; and Roger Gaither (Linda), of Mt. Ida; as well as countless other friends, family, and colleagues who were fortunate to know James.

Services entrusted to Smith-Benton Funeral Home..

Online guestbook: www.SmithFamilyCares.com.