



James Robert Sullivan

July 3, 1939 - May 17, 2024

James "Jim" Robert Sullivan, age 84, of Eagan, Minnesota, passed away on May 17, 2024. He leaves a profound legacy of faith and a commitment to humanitarian service that extended across continents. Jim's life story is a testament to the transformative power of faith and the significant impact one individual can have on the lives of many. His favorite scripture, Psalm 1:1-3, beautifully encapsulates his journey. The passage illustrates a life that, although filled with challenges, was deeply rooted in faith and enriched by his contributions to others.

Jim was born on July 3, 1939, in Chicago and grew up on the south side in an Irish immigrant community. Like other families, his experienced the challenges of that time. His mother, Mildred (Langdon) Sullivan, held three jobs to maintain their family, often leaving Jim, the youngest by 16 years alone. When she remarried, Jim's stepfather, John Scholl, a railroad worker, he was frequently absent due to his job, leaving Jim to spend much of his time alone. For his education, Jim attended Wentworth Elementary School and later a vocational high school.

During his formative years, Jim struggled to find the purpose in life he desired. However, the seeds of change were sown through his interactions with Dr. Carry, a city-employed surgeon who saw potential and a purpose for Jim. Dr. Carry often employed Jim as a driver during his rounds to police stations and holding cells. Through these journeys, he imparted guidance and had serious

discussions about the severe consequences of Jim's current lifestyle. Seeking discipline and a fresh start, Jim enlisted in the Navy in February 1959. This experience began to instill the discipline he sought, though he continued to search for a deeper purpose. After returning to Chicago, Jim pursued a career in the restaurant industry as a troubleshooter. It was in this role that he met Kathy Hollingsworth, who would become his wife. They married on December 14, 1973.

Jim experienced a profound transformation of faith during his marriage. This radical change propelled him to pursue theological studies, leading him to earn degrees from the Moody Bible Institute and a Master of Divinity from Trinity University in Deerfield. His faith led him to a vocation in pastoral work, where he dedicated 35 years of himself to transforming lives through the teachings of Christ.

During this period, Jim and Kathy became directors for Child Evangelism Fellowship® (CEF) of Illinois, with both serving as the acting director and teacher-trainer for the chapter. Jim resigned from the position in 1988. Soon after Jim began his journey as a youth pastor at the Naperville Congregational Church in Naperville, Illinois. There he led several youth groups and loved to take the groups on mission trips to places like New Mexico and Colorado. It was through these trips the Jim discovered the joy in service to others while imparting the importance of compassion, care and service to others for teens in their formative years - leaving a lifelong impact on the youth he led in those five years. Jim then took an assignment with the First Congregational Church in Buffalo Center, Iowa as their lead pastor in 1992, where he remained as the church stabilized, and eventually moved to his final role from the pulpit at Church of Peace in Norwood Young America, Minnesota.

Jim's calling took on a new dimension in 2006 when he first traveled to Ghana, West Africa. Deeply moved by the hardships he witnessed, he

founded Operation Dignity International (ODI) in 2007. His passion for the people of Ghana drove him to help alleviate poverty, build relationships, and share the teachings of his friend, Jesus. Under his visionary leadership, ODI introduced the first medical and dental teams to the area and established educational initiatives. These efforts not only provided immediate relief but also laid the groundwork for sustainable improvements in the community's health and education systems. Jim's commitment to enhancing the lives of those in need left a lasting impact, transforming countless lives through his dedication and compassion.

Despite his profound impact and dedication, Jim never felt fully worthy of his calling. He struggled to reconcile his past with his future. An avid reader of theology, he immersed himself in understanding God's word, seeking deeper insights. He prayed fervently for wisdom, which ultimately became one of his most recognized attributes.

Outside of his ministry, Jim was an avid movie buff. He loved the experience of watching movies in a theater, with popcorn and a soda, and while content to go on his own, he loved when he was accompanied. In a recent trip to LA, Jim had the chance to visit Hollywood to get pictures with the stars of his actor/actress favorites like Judy Garland, Mickey Rooney and John Wayne. And while he appreciated movies of all genres, he was especially fond of classic Westerns.

Jim is survived by his wife, Kathy (Hollingsworth) Sullivan, who continues to manage ODI;

His Children: Robert (Maria) Rogers, Maurica Jo Baker, Coleen (Jonny) Diggs, Robbie (Joel) Danko, Jamie (Matt Shaw) Paige, James Sullivan, Jr., Marquesha Tolson, Izaiah Sullivan

Grandchildren: Chrisovalanda (Scott) Rogers - Wilkins, Joanna (Derek) Leciejewski, Nicole (Mike) Isaacs, Bobbie Rogers, Victoria Rogers, Robert John Rogers, Kevin (Agnes) Marshall, Christopher Havoc, John Constantino,

Jr., Scott (Angie) Sullivan, Jaeden Danko, Christian Danko, Levi Danko, Maliq Underwood, Jhene Underwood Great Grandchildren: Matthew, Anastasia, Mikey, Tinley, Colson, Riley, Embrie, Kallum, Zavian, Avery, Lily, Jackson, Aiden, Parker, Cooper and Sadie

Preceded in death by parents Maurice John Sullivan, Mildred Leona (Langdon) Scholl, John Scholl. Siblings Levina, Helen Lathrop, Francis, Gerald and Maurice Jr.

A service to celebrate the life of James "Jim" Robert Sullivan will be held on Saturday, June 8, at Easter Lutheran Church. Visitation is scheduled for 10 a.m., followed by a service at 11:00 a.m. The service will also be available by live stream at this link, which will start broadcasting 10 minutes prior to the start of the service: <https://www.youtube.com/live/4YWfNGP5HRE>

A luncheon will take place at 12:00 p.m. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to Operation Dignity International, an organization close to Jim's heart.

www.Washburn-McReavy.com

Edina Chapel 952-920-3996

Previous Events

Visitation

JUN 8. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Easter Lutheran Church - Hill Campus
4200 Pilot Knob Road
Eagan, MN 55122

Memorial Service

JUN 8. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

Easter Lutheran Church - Hill Campus
4200 Pilot Knob Road
Eagan, MN 55122

Tribute Wall

RR

“ Ronell R. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of James Robert Sullivan.

Ronell R. - June 08, 2024 at 10:16 AM

LF

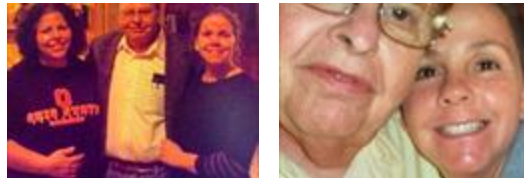
“ Love your Son, Robert & Family.. purchased the Lily and Rose Tribute Spray for the family of James Robert Sullivan.



Love your Son, Robert & Family.. - June 05, 2024 at 09:52 AM

CO

“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



Coleen - June 03, 2024 at 10:47 AM



“ Serene Retreat was purchased for the family of James Robert Sullivan.



June 03, 2024 at 09:20 AM