



James Brownson

February 6, 1955 - January 23, 2026

James (Jim) Brownson, 70, passed into the arms of his Creator on January 23rd, surrounded by his family.

Jim served as associate pastor at Faith Reformed Church in Traverse City, MI, taught at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, MI, then served at Western Theological Seminary in Holland, MI as the James and Jean Cook Professor of New Testament and academic dean. Jim touched many lives through his teaching, his service to the Reformed Church in America, and the four books he authored. He was a tireless advocate for the full inclusion of LGBTQ+ people in the church through his book *Bible, Gender, Sexuality: Reframing the Church's Debate on Same-Sex Relationships* and his work with The Reformation Project.

Jim was a thoughtful and loving husband, father, grandfather, and friend, a beloved teacher, and a wise counselor. His gentle spirit persisted even through dementia. He was deeply loved. Jim is survived by his wife, Kathryn Mostrom Brownson, children, Rachel Brownson Brazier (LJ Brazier), Anna Brownson Prinz (Mark Prinz), Will Brownson (Michael Brownson), grandson, Wren Brownson Prinz, and brother, Jonathan Brownson. He was preceded in death by his parents, Bill and Helen Brownson, brothers Billy Brownson and David Brownson, and sister-in-law Jeannette Shafer Brownson.

The memorial service to honor Jim's life will be held at 2 pm Saturday, May 16, 2026, at Hope Church 77 West 11th Street, Holland. Memorial contributions may be given to Hope Church.

www.langelandsterenberg.com

Upcoming Events

Memorial Service

MAY **16**. 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM (ET)

Hope Church
77 W. 11th St.
Holland, MI 49423

Tribute Wall



“ *Beautiful in Blue* was purchased for the family of James Brownson.



April 30 at 02:42 PM



“ *Kathy, my wife and I returned from Palm Springs, California to learn of Jim's passing. Shocked and stunned doesn't begin to describe my emotions. Jim and I go back to seminary days. We had lunches here and there to discuss his book regarding a theology of sexuality. Jim's book was a hit in our church in Palm Sprngs. He was special and irreplaceable. Kathy, accept my condolences along with the remainder of the family. May Jim rest in peace and perpetual light with all the Saints.*

Tom Woudstra - April 17 at 09:43 PM



“ *I'm a fan of of his work and very sorry to hear about his passing. Grace and peace to his family and friends. Thank you James ❤️*

Jeff Schutter - February 10 at 05:11 PM



“ *James A. planted a grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of James Brownson.*

James A. - February 05 at 02:49 PM

FR

“ Dear Family,
I'm just a person of the Catholic Church. To notice January 23rd is not unusual for me. Three things happened to my Mom and I. Years ago, my brother passed of AIDS. Thirty three years young. Jesus I Trust in You. Stockbridge.
This gentleman now rests in His loving arms. Peace.

Friend - February 04 at 09:49 AM



“ nnnnnnnnnnnnnnn

Kim Harter - January 28 at 06:51 PM



Entering this above sure didn't work out for me. Jim was a best friend. I loved him dearly. He taught me so much. It was wonderful being with him
We were best friends through all our school years.
He was brilliant and fun.

Kim Harter - January 28 at 06:59 PM

OM

“ Dr. Brownson's work have broken many barriers, even language barriers. As a humble spanish speaking lesbian from Puerto Rico searching for answers I found clarity and hope through his work, and I am deeply grateful for everything he have done in support of LGBTQ inclusion within the Church. His faithfulness and dedication have changed many lives, including mine. RIP

Odette Miranda - January 28 at 01:30 PM

AN

“ I'm just a random person, not someone who knew Dr. Brownson personally, but his work was hugely impactful on me when I was in the process of coming out. He had a positive influence on so many people and I wish his loved ones all the best.

anon - January 27 at 01:36 PM



“ I am immensely thankful for Dr. Brownson and his work! Bible, Gender, & Sexuality met me at a moment of questioning and need that was very similar to Dr. Brownson's own story. With thoughtful depth and compassion, he laid out a revisionists path to stay faithful to the text of the Bible while accepting its questionable lines with context and understanding! Thank you, Sir!! You have enriched my life and that of family and friends with whom I've shared this milestone work!!! Gods speed!

Gil Herrick - January 27 at 10:17 AM

SH

“ We are deeply grateful to Jim Brownson for sharing his academic brilliance and the love of Christ with our LGBTQ families. His was one of the first books I read, at least twice, to glean the nuggets of his theology and to hear his heart of love for our children. My husband, Doug and I got to sit with him at a Reformation luncheon and considered it such an honor just to know him and be there with him. We are deeply grateful for his life and legacy and send his family all our love and gratitude. Surely, his life is celebrated on earth and in heaven with all the angels and saints. With love and gratitude, Shauna and Doug Habel.

Shauna Habel-Morgan - January 27 at 10:04 AM

DD

“ I will be eternally grateful for the encouragement and education i received from Dr Brownson’s books and seminars. Part of his legacy will truly be his profound and courageous efforts to teach about biblical truths and theology. The fruits of the Spirit were lavishly reflected in his grace and humility. He made a great impact on me and countless thousands of others.

Douglas Darnell - January 27 at 08:52 AM

JK

“ Dr. Brownson's book on Gender and Sexuality, blessed many of us who had so many questions, but no answers. His writings and heart helped me and many others find peace and renewed faith. I'm sorry for the loss of a special person. John K.

John K - January 27 at 08:41 AM

JD

“ I will be forever grateful for the support and kindness he gave to me when my son came out as Gay. He listened, counseled, prayed, and gave me so much grace as I questioned and navigated through this journey of love and peace. May God welcome you home, Jim!

Jill DeVries - January 27 at 08:00 AM

AM

“ Sending love to you Kath.

Alicia Mannes - January 27 at 07:18 AM

MI

“ Rest in peace. You moved the ball forward for LGBT Christians, Christ’s other sheep.

Michael - January 27 at 06:04 AM

NC

“ *Jim was a kind and deeply passionate person. I loved his book, and appreciated his commitment to equality and love.*

Nancy Campbell - January 26 at 09:35 PM

PF

“ *Our sincere condolences to The Brownson Family.
We send our love & prayers, Jonathan.*

*The Fabiano Family
Holland Peanut Store*

Paula Fabiano - January 24 at 08:44 PM