

James Balfour Smith

December 18, 1932 - December 21, 2023

James B. Smith, age 91, passed away Thursday, December 21, 2023, after a fall and short illness.

James was born in Belding MI on December 18, 1932, to Dr. Karl and Wilma Smith. When he was young, the family moved to Greenville, MI and it is here Jim grew up and attended school through the 11th grade. Jim attended Kemper Military School in Booneville MO for his senior year and first year of college.

In 1953 Jim enlisted in the Air Force and served until 1957. He was trained as a meteorologist and served 2 years in Alaska. He was always watching the clouds and following the weather.

After the Air Force he finished college at Central Michigan earning a degree in Education and spent his 32-year career teaching high school Biology at West Ottawa High School in Holland retiring in 1991. He spent his summers working as a carpenter building houses and later working as a farm hand on his friend, Wayne Pynnonen's blueberry farm. It was here he got the nickname Sunshine.

In retirement he enjoyed making baskets, fly fishing, reading, and spending time with his grandkids. Jim was a loving, hardworking man that spent a

lifetime sharing the things he loved with his family and friends. Whether it was the years of family vacations spent traveling the countryside, singing in the church choir, and helping family and friends.

He was preceded in death by his wife of 56 years, Barbara Smith in 2015. He is survived by his daughter, Colleen Ball and son-in-law Tom; son, Aaron Smith and daughter-in-law Bridget; grandkids, Travis, Sarah and her husband Kirk, Nicole and her husband Landon, Danielle, and Zachary; great-grandchildren, Deakon 4, Juke 1 ½, Douglas 5, Adeline 3, Virgil 2, Silas 4 months; and an older brother, Richard Smith, age 94.

Visitation is from 4:00-6:00 pm Friday, January 5, 2023, at Langeland Sterenberg Funeral Home, 315 E. 16th St. Holland, MI 49423.

Funeral is at 11:00 am Saturday, January 6, 2024, at First Presbyterian Church, 659 State St. Holland, MI 49423.

Memorial contributions in Jim's honor may be given to the Braille and Talking Book Library. Checks can be made payable to the "Library of Michigan Foundation" with a note on the memo line indicating "BTBL", and mailed to: Library of Michigan Foundation, PO Box 11027, Lansing, MI 48901.

www.langelandsterenberg.com.

Cemetery Details

Restlawn Memorial Gardens

994 Paw Paw Dr
Holland, MI 49423
(616) 396-4949

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN 5. 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM (ET)

Langeland-Sterenberg Funeral Home
315 E 16th St
Holland, MI 49423
(616) 392-2306
info@langelandsterenberg.com
<http://langelandsterenberg.com/>

Memorial Service

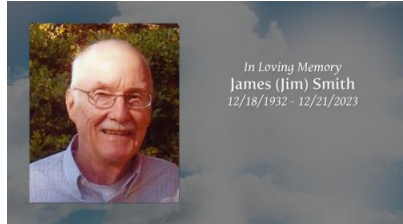
JAN 6. 11:00 AM (ET)

First Presbyterian Church
659 State St.
Holland, MI 49423

Tribute Wall



“ *Langeland-Sterenberg Yntema Funeral Homes created a Tribute Video in memory of James Balfour Smith*



Langeland-Sterenberg Yntema Funeral Homes - December 30, 2023 at 09:20 AM



“ *Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of James Balfour Smith.*



January 05, 2024 at 01:43 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of James Balfour Smith.*



January 03, 2024 at 12:41 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of James Balfour Smith.*



January 02, 2024 at 03:52 PM



“ *Aaron and Family. I am very sorry for your loss. I hope things go as well as possible. Kurt Stucker of GM Marion.*

Kurt Stucker - January 02, 2024 at 02:56 PM



Thanks Kurt

Aaron Smith - January 03, 2024 at 02:59 PM



“ *Mr. Smith was the best teacher that I ever had! He was my Biology teacher in 1973..9th grade. Never took so many "Notes", think I still have all those notebooks. He knew that note taking was the best way to retain knowledge and he was right. I had him last hour and remember that his wife at times would come into the classroom with his Bassett Hound, what a neat dog!! Super great memories for sure. My condolences to his family.*

Marsha Veneklasen V.T. - January 01, 2024 at 03:01 PM



Marsha thanks for the great memories! Daisy was a great dog and loved going to school to meet Dad.

Aaron Smith - January 03, 2024 at 03:04 PM

JB

“ *Mr Smith was a wonderful teacher. I had him when West Ottawa opened the new school. I had him in 9th grade. I believe he started the home building program for students to learn the trade. Girls were learning to make drapes and other items for the home. He always was very helpful making theatre sets for our plays . Just thought his children might like to hear that some of his students still remembered him.*

Judy Van Oosterhout Bakker - December 29, 2023 at 08:33 PM

AS

Judy thanks for the memories! Dad was very involved with the theater building sets and running lights. Growing up family spent many nights working with him on them. I continued working with dad until I was in high school.

Aaron Smith - January 03, 2024 at 03:09 PM

JB

I believe you were a little fellow when I at WOHS. Mr Rucker was the first teacher to start a theater program. Your Father was always busy teaching and then working on our theater sets. I forgot that he also did the lighting. Wonderful good memories. They had so much energy to teach all days and busy with theater in the evening with students.

Judy Van Oosterhout Bakker - February 12, 2024 at 05:32 PM



“ *Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of James Balfour Smith.*



December 29, 2023 at 08:41 AM

SS

“ I have many memories of Jim. One of them was a few months after he and Barb were married and the 3 of us drove to Florida for Christmas. We drove straight through and during the night I was awoken with Jim yelling out the window. He said he was getting tired so he was yelling (not sure what he was yelling) out the window to keep awake. Needless to say both Barb and I were then awake!

Another was at Barb and Jim's wedding and his brother Dick put some small fire crackers in his pocket -- you guessed it, somehow the went off blowing out his pocket and tuxedo pants.

Sandy Swaby - December 28, 2023 at 06:57 PM

AS

Thanks for the memories, Aunt Sandy.

Aaron Smith - January 03, 2024 at 03:06 PM