



Reverend S. Sturgis Poorman Jr.

June 21, 1945 - September 24, 2018

Rev. S. Sturgis Poorman, Jr., 73, of Bryn Mawr, PA, passed away peacefully, surrounded by family, on September 24, 2018.

Sturge was born on June 21, 1945 in Nashville, TN to Dr. S. Sturgis and Christine (Freeland) Poorman. Sturge grew up in Ardmore, PA, where he attended Lower Merion High School and Haverford College, starring on both the baseball and soccer teams. He was awarded Haverford's Varsity Cup in 1967 as the most outstanding senior athlete.

He is survived by his wife Joanne (Rainey), who he met as a teenager at Ardmore Presbyterian Church. They married immediately after Sturge's graduation from Haverford College with a bachelor's degree in history and they enjoyed 51 loving years together. Sturge went on to earn his master's degree in divinity at Princeton Theological Seminary in 1970. He started his career as a Presbyterian pastor in upstate NY. Together, Sturge and Joanne threw themselves into creating loving communities of faith wherever they went. He served at four different churches over 30 years—at both West & East Hebron Presbyterian Churches in Hebron, NY, then at City Presbyterian Church in Harare, Zimbabwe, and finally at the First Presbyterian Church in Phoenixville, PA.

Sturge was willing to take risks when he heard God's call. First was his

decision to move his young family to Harare, Zimbabwe in 1984, only four years after that country gained independence. In 1994, it was to become an Ecumenical Peace Monitor, through the World Council of Churches, during South Africa's first free elections, which ended 50 years of apartheid. In 1999, after retiring as a pastor, he stepped out on faith again, founding Welcoming the Stranger, a nonprofit in Bucks County dedicated to serving the educational needs of immigrants and refugees.

His work advocating for immigrants and refugees continued to the end of his life. Sturge led Welcoming the Stranger for 17 years before retiring at the age of 70. While retired he continued to volunteer his time and helped start a small ministry mobilizing local churches to help refugees and asylum-seekers find temporary housing and to connect them with other vital services upon arrival in the United States.

Sturge was a joyful and kind presence in every setting. He never tired of competing athletically, reveling in competition his entire life. He was playing basketball twice a week and pitching in a church softball league into his 70s. More than anything else, he loved the company of friends and family, and had hundreds scattered throughout the world. He loved talking and listening—about faith, about family, about whatever was on the heart of the person in front of him. To talk to Sturge was to feel welcome and to feel heard.

In addition to his wife, Sturge is survived by his sons Aaron and Garth; a daughter Keli (Del) Dzordzorme; his grandchildren Marco, Ivan, David and Abby; his brother Donald (Sherina) Poorman; and countless others who he considered and cared for as family. He was predeceased by both his brother and sister-in-law, John & Bobby Poorman.

A memorial service will be held at Ardmore Presbyterian Church, 5 W. Montgomery Ave., Ardmore, PA 19003 on Saturday, October 6 at 2pm, with a

reception to follow.

Donations in his honor may be sent to Welcoming the Stranger, PO Box 1156, Langhorne, PA 19047 or Ardmore Presbyterian Church. Please specify "Sturgis Poorman Memorial". All donations will go toward programs Sturge helped start because he felt God's call to work tirelessly to welcome immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers to this country.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

OCT 6. 2:00 PM (ET)

Ardmore Presbyterian Church
5 West Montgomery Avenue
Ardmore, PA

Tribute Wall



“ *It is with sadness that I just googled Rev Poorman and noticed that his earthly journey had ended. To his family . Thanks for sharing him with me. I carried his smile and unconditional love with me every minute of everyday. Thanks*

Coral Haynes- Tucker (Barbados) - October 16, 2019 at 11:00 AM



“ *We have come to know this sad news just today. We couldn't believe that Rev Sturgis is no more among us. No idea why God needed him that early. There must be a group waiting for his leadership there. We miss him a lot. May God rest his soul in peace.*

Our heartfelt condolences for the family and friends left behind.

Kandulas

kandulas - October 21, 2018 at 06:32 PM



“ *Sturgis was a great teacher and had a big heart for the strangers who came to the US with the dreams for a better life. He helped me and many other immigrants make these dreams come true. I had a good fortune to meet Sturgis and to be his student. I will always remember Sturgis Poorman and his priceless lessons.*

Polina Kravets - October 02, 2018 at 09:48 PM



“ *Lovely One Spathiphyllum Plant was purchased for the family of Reverend S. Sturgis Poorman Jr..*



October 02, 2018 at 09:12 PM



“ *Sturge was able to connect with people while delivering a sermon, during a Bible study and while playing basketball or softball. I will never forget my youth group years with Sturge; he made us want to come to church and took an interest in all aspects of our lives. He even took me to a 76ers game knowing how much I wanted to see Dr J play before he retired. Sturgis and his family left an indelible mark throughout the Hebron area. My thoughts and prayers go out to his family.*
Wendy Getty Harrington

Wendy Harrington - October 01, 2018 at 04:51 PM



“ *I can honestly say how Blessed, honoured and privileged I was to have met you and known you and your family during your time in Zimbabwe. Thank you for all you taught me about Jesus Christ and His love for all humanity. My teenage years were some of the happiest years of my life, especially times spent with you and your family at Bible Study, camp and Sunday services. Thank you Reverend Poorman. Words are not enough to express my gratitude, but I know that T he LORS will reward you on my behalf. You truly are a great man of God. May The LORD bless and comfort your family at this difficult time. Love - Plaxcy Sadziwa, London, United Kingdom*

Plaxedes Sadziwa - October 01, 2018 at 12:54 PM

PS

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Plaxedes Sadziwa - October 01, 2018 at 11:57 AM

NB

“ Most of us can name the few souls who have crossed our life paths and changed us forever. Sturge was one of those people for me and for so very many others. His example formed my faith and will continue to always. God has blessed us and I know he will comfort Your family and all those who mourn.
Nancy Flint-Budde

Nancy Budde - October 01, 2018 at 11:28 AM

PS

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Plaxedes Sadziwa - October 01, 2018 at 12:49 PM

DW

Joanne and Sturge were wonderful neighbors, along with being a shining example of what a pastor should be. He influenced my life tremendously developing my faith. His children also were a great part of my children's lives as well. especially his son Arron with my daughter Angela . I pray for Joanne and the boys to have comfort and peace at this sad time. Our thoughts and prayers are with you all. Dotty Worthington and family.

Dorothy Worthington - October 01, 2018 at 02:02 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Reverend S. Sturgis Poorman Jr..*



September 29, 2018 at 01:15 PM

TM

“ *Dear Joanne and family, Jim and I were so sorry to hear of Sturge's passing. He was a beautiful person sharing the love of the Lord and has finally reached His welcoming arms. We will keep you and your family in our prayers as you go through this difficult time.*
Frannie and Jim McGarrity

The McGarrity's - September 29, 2018 at 10:47 AM