



Malcolm Roger Courts

January 2, 1936 - August 23, 2017

Malcolm “Roger” Courts was born on January 2, 1936, in Harttown, Mississippi. He was the youngest of five children born to Ernestine “Tina” Dorothy Hart Courts and Willie Gordon Courts. Roger’s parents, four siblings, and his beloved daughter, Amanda Leigh “Mandy” Courts preceded him in death.

Roger passed into the eternal, loving embrace of God on August 23, 2017, surrounded by his family. Until early this year, he was a vivacious and active 81 year old, who succumbed to a brief rapid-onset case of acute interstitial lung disease.

His proudest accomplishment and legacy is his seven children and thirteen grandchildren, all of whom honor him with their devotion and deep respect and love.

After growing up on the family farm in Pickens, Mississippi, Roger attended Holmes Junior College and Memphis State (University of Memphis), where he earned degrees in English and Psychology. For three years, Roger served in the U.S. Army Signal Corp as a photographer. He was stationed at Fort Richie, Maryland; Fort Churchill, Canada; and White Sands Proving Ground, New Mexico.

Following service, Roger was employed by Sacred Heart League & Southern Missions in Walls, Mississippi, where he devoted 42 years of professional service as its director and CEO. Among his numerous accomplishments as a servant leader, Roger was instrumental in distributing millions of copies of the Bible and the New Testament through the American Bible Society. For his efforts, Roger was made an Honorary Lifetime Member of ABS.

Roger also pioneered fundraising for the League's ministries, becoming a nationally renowned nonprofit leader. In the late 1980s, Roger conceived the idea to produce a feature film, which conveyed Judeo-Christian values through its distribution around the world. "The Spitfire Grill," won the 1996 Audience Award at the Sundance Film Festival, and profits from the sale of the film funded the construction of Sacred Heart School (K – 8), in Southaven, Mississippi.

In 1987, with the desire to promote pilgrimage tours to the Holy Land, Roger co-founded Travel 'N' Tours, Inc., the first travel and tour company in northwest Mississippi. Throughout 30 years, Roger facilitated tours for thousands of pilgrims to the land where Jesus walked, and to the holy sites and shrines of western Europe.

Roger was an avid photographer, videographer, scholar, writer, world traveler, and ballroom dancer (Arthur Murray School of Dance silver medalist).

Those whom Roger leaves behind to cherish his memory include his children and grandchildren: Christopher Courts (wife, Kim; children Matthew, Christian, Will); Mary Courts McCammon (husband, David; children Lauren Boone, Zachary

Boone, Cody, Kyle); Gregory Courts (wife, Lisa); Timothy Courts (children Mandy and Hannah); Sean Courts (wife, Betzabeth; children Autumn,

Isabella, Nicholas); Kimberly Courts Clayton (daughter Olivia). Additionally, Roger's memory will be cherished by: his former wife, Jana Link Courts; his best friend and business partner of 35 years, Mark Ratay; his granddaughter in-law, Ashley Courts; and his former daughters in-law and sons in-law: Stacy Allison Litwa, Tracy Scott Courts; Ronnie Boone; and James Clayton. Roger also leaves behind numerous beloved nieces and nephews, and devoted friends both locally and around the world.

Visitation with the family will be on Saturday, August 26, beginning at 2:00 p.m. followed by a celebration of life memorial service at 4:00 p.m., Pastor Cheryl K. Cornish officiating. The visitation and service will take place at First Congregational United Church of Christ, 1000 South Cooper Street, Memphis, Tennessee 38104. Burial will be at the Courts family cemetery in Pickens, Mississippi.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that memorial contributions be made to one of the following: the First Congregational United Church of Christ Mission & Vision Fund at the address listed above or the Poor Clares Community of Catholic Women, Monastery of St. Clare, 1310 Dellwood Avenue, Memphis, Tennessee 38127.

The family extends heartfelt appreciation to the incredible staffs and medical professionals at Baptist Memorial Hospital DeSoto, Stern Cardiovascular Foundation, and Memphis Lung Physicians Foundation.

"To the King of ages, incorruptible, invisible, the only God, honor and glory forever and ever. Amen!" I Timothy 1:12-17

Previous Events

Visitation

AUG **26**. 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM (CT)

First Congregational United Church of Christ
1000 South Cooper St.
Memphis, TN 38104

Memorial Service

AUG **26**. 4:00 PM (CT)

First Congregational United Church of Christ
1000 South Cooper St.
Memphis, TN 38104

Tribute Wall

SK

“ Roger was one of the nicest, kindest and dedicated man I ever had the privilege to know and work with in the newly created CADET educational program. Roger was always supportive and encouraging to me, a young and first time principal at CADET. Roger's contributions of professional, gentleness and caring enriched our lives and that of so many others. With great gratitude,
Sister Sheila Kloss

Sister Sheila Kloss - August 28, 2017 at 07:57 PM

CC

“ 30 years ago a piece of mail came from Roger Courts(then a stranger) inviting pastors to consider going on a familiarization tour of Israel. Michael Schneller, the pastor I worked with, knew that I had a dream of going on pilgrimage to the Holy Land. We went on our first pilgrimage with Roger and Mark Thanksgiving 1988, and brought New Orleans Resurrection of Our Lord parishioners with us in 1992 and Our Lady of Perpetual Help Belle Chasse parishioners in 1999. Mark and some of his family were with us on an early trip...and both Roger and Mark have been dear friends ever since...always very generous and very helpful. I will remember Roger as a true blue loving giving southern gentleman who walks the walk of the Christ he serves. You his dear family and best friend Mark will miss Roger tremendously for he was/is larger than life. Roger leaves his legacy of love with you, with us. My prayers are for you and my deepest sympathy,
Cynthia Sabathier, CSJ

Cynthia Sabathier CSJ - August 27, 2017 at 06:57 PM

OD

“ Roger used his time on Earth to lift people up, to spread love and compassion, and to inspire everyone he met. My deepest condolences to his family.

Osha Gray Davidson - August 27, 2017 at 10:20 AM

LO

“ I just read the obituary for Roger and what a powerful and true tribute it is. Roger was a man of character, compassion and action. Through who was, all of his actions, and his world-wide network of family, friends and acquaintances, he truly made the world a better place for countless. That's a mission that we can all learn from and strive to achieve. Roger will be deeply missed. His influence will live on in my heart and serve as inspiration to be the change I want to see in this world. My sincere condolences to all who knew and loved Roger. - Leslie O'Connell and family - Greg, Chloe and Grace

Leslie O'Connell - August 25, 2017 at 01:31 PM

DE

“ Roger befriended my 93 year old mother over 20 years ago and has made her life much more enjoyable. She will miss him greatly and I'm glad they met in New Harmony, Indiana and continued their wonderful relationship for so many years. God speed Roger.

David Ellenstein - August 25, 2017 at 09:34 AM



“ Small Garden Dish was purchased for the family of Malcolm Roger Courts.



August 24, 2017 at 03:37 PM