



Darrell Edward Kennedy

March 15, 1939 - April 4, 2014

Darrell Edward Kennedy, 75, of Vancouver, Washington, peacefully went to meet Jesus on April 4, 2014, surrounded by his wife Naomi, his children, and grandchildren. He was born to the late Hester and Mattie Kennedy on March 15, 1939, in Oak Forest, Illinois. He graduated from Kennewick High School in Kennewick, Washington in 1956. He attended God's Bible School in Cincinnati, Ohio. He met the love of his life, Naomi Knapp of Nampa, Idaho, and they were married November 27, 1959. They lived in Nampa for almost nine years, had four children, and Darrell began his Christian radio career at KBGN in nearby Caldwell, Idaho. The family moved to Portland, Oregon, in May of 1968 where he continued his Christian radio vocation at KPDQ in advertising sales. He was the voice of the popular program, The Gospel Sing, heard each Saturday night for over 25 years. He promoted and hosted dozens of gospel concerts throughout the Portland area over the years. He went on to become the General Manager of stations K-P-D-Q, K-F-I-S "The Fish," and K-P-A-M. Darrell was manager and sang lead for the well-known southern gospel group, The Challengers, based in Portland. The group traveled and ministered to small churches and blessed large audiences throughout the region. Highlights included performing at the 1974 World's Fair in Spokane, Washington, and sharing the stage with groups such as the Blackwood Brothers, the Oakridge Boys, the Cathedrals, the Nelons, and many other groups. Darrell and Naomi served as music ministers throughout their married life, traveling across the country in the early years to various church

conferences and camp meetings. They were worship pastors at nearly every church they attended. He also served his community as a Multnomah County Reserve Deputy, graduating from the police academy and completing 8 years as an unpaid peace officer. After retiring from radio, Darrell assumed a leadership role at Frontier Missions in Troutdale, Oregon, a non-profit organization that assisted Native Americans throughout the US. He served in this role for nearly 10 years. The Portland Trail Blazers were Darrell's team. He was a season ticket holder the year following the Championship and for more than 20 seasons, he, his family and friends cheered the team at each home game. To get away from the gray winter blahs of the Pacific Northwest, Darrell and Naomi loved to travel just about any place warm and tropical. They often spent time in the Caribbean, Hawaii, and the Southwest and would return sporting the requisite sun tan. He was a man completely devoted to his family and his greatest joy was to be surrounded by his kids, grandkids, great-grandkids, and to share in all aspects of their lives. His influence and encouragement positively impacted people wherever he was involved. Darrell is survived by his wife of 54 years, Naomi, his four children, Debbie Kantola and her husband Marty, Becky Fields and her husband Randy, Sandy Webb with her husband Dave, and Greg Kennedy. They have 11 grandchildren and various spouses, and 7 great-grandchildren. Darrell is also survived by his brother Clyde Kennedy and his wife Betty of Kennewick, Washington, sister Norma Patterson with her husband Jack of Portland, Oregon, and brother Ron Kennedy and his wife Diane of Indianapolis, Indiana. He also leaves behind numerous nieces, nephews, and cousins. He was welcomed into Heaven by his parents, Hester and Mattie, his in-laws, Tracy and Ruby Knapp, his brother-in-law, Dale Knapp, his niece, Lori Owens, his great-granddaughter, Aubrey Rose Clinton, and a host of friends and loved ones. Donations may be made in his name to Shriners Hospital in Portland, Oregon to honor his grandson Jacob Kennedy.

Tribute Wall



“ 0 file added to the tribute wall

Evergreen Memorial Gardens - July 03, 2025 at 03:28 PM

MP

“ *Dear Friend Naomi and Families: We wish to join in the circle of caring friends and families who are surrounding you with sincere love, support and prayers. We have so many fond memories of Darrell: When you and your families would organize Frontier Mission trips - Darrell always carrying a presence/confidence that all was in order and under control - along with your faithful and dynamic support at the piano. We also remember enjoying the banter and fun times spent with the Kennedys and the Coonrods!! God Bless you and your families, Naomi, in lonely days ahead - even as Darrell continues to live within your hearts. One day together again with our Heavenly Father forever. Our love, Mel & June*

Mel & June Palmquist - April 13, 2014 at 12:00 AM

JH

“ *To the Family of Darrell Kennedy; Our family wants to extend our heartfelt sympathy in the passing of Darrell. May you find peace and comfort in the days ahead to help you through this difficult time. Remember the good times and rest in the arms of Jesus as you move on in the days ahead.*

Janet Hutson - April 11, 2014 at 12:00 AM