



## Oliver Wendell Johnson

September 23, 1927 - December 18, 2018

The lord called Oliver Johnson home on December 18, 2018. He was born September 23, 1927 in Powers Lake, North Dakota. The second youngest of 6 children, Oliver grew up at his father's blacksmith shop and on the basketball court until finding his calling as a man of faith.

After graduating from Central Bible Institute in Springfield, Missouri, he traveled across the Northeastern United States and Canada as a passionate and gregarious evangelist.

During his travels, he met and fell for Fern Smalridge after Fern's sister played matchmaker during a visit to Niagara Falls, Ontario. After a persistent courtship, Oliver proposed next to the rush of the waterfall itself, and Fern and Oliver were married June 4th, 1956 in Toronto, Canada. The newlyweds then moved to Minnesota in 1956, where their first child Lorri was born. They continued on, as Oliver served in ministerial positions in each new location and compelled shy Fern to sing alongside him. The duo even recorded and released an LP of their gospel renditions. During these religious adventures, Ivy was born in the city of New England, North Dakota.

As their daughters reached school-age, Oliver and Fern shifted their nomadic life to one of more permanent residences. The family founded an Assemblies of God Church in Burlington, Vermont. Soon after, Carl was born and the

family moved to Montreal, Quebec. Two years later in 1967, Mark was born in Medford, Massachusetts. The Johnson family then spent a year in Ames, Iowa before landing in Seattle in 1970. A talented salesperson, Oliver used his passion for music and natural sociability to sell pianos and organs there for the next 11 years. During his years in Seattle, Oliver attended Seattle University, where he earned his Master's Degree in Education.

Continuing to follow his calling to serve as a minister, in 1981 Oliver and Fern with their two sons moved to Vancouver, Washington where they found a permanent home. Combining his passions for ministering and music-making, Oliver continued to play the organ and piano for the church while also selling instruments for Cascade Pianos.

He spent his time camping, traveling, playing basketball, and passing quiet moments with his love, Fern.

Oliver is survived by Fern, his wife of 62 years; their 4 children: Lorri, Ivy, Carl and Mark; and their loving grandchildren.

Oliver will be remembered for his unwavering faith, his desire to build relationships, and his dedication to provide for his family. He taught those around him to forgive freely, persevere, and to always look sharp while doing so. He could always be counted on for a warm embrace or a loving prayer. He will be dearly and deeply missed.

A Memorial Service will be held at 11 a.m. on Saturday, January 12th, 2019 at Fourth Plain Church of the Nazarene in Vancouver, WA.