



Rev. David Lee Bailey Sr.

November 12, 1935 - February 8, 2024

Rev. David L. Bailey, Sr., 88 passed away suddenly on February 8, 2024. Born in Salem, NJ, on November 12, 1935, Dave was the son of Clarence S. and Stella M. (nee: Ridenour) Bailey. Dave's childhood was spent in Penns Grove, NJ and he graduated in 1953 from Penns Grove High School (ReHi). Dave is survived by his wife of sixty-seven years, Eileen, brother Pierson, his daughter, Elizabeth Jean Bailey, his son, Assemblyman David L. Bailey, Jr. (Julie), grandchildren Emilee Dalessio, Gillian Bailey, Michael Dalessio, Colin Bailey and Katelyn Bailey along with his loving nieces, nephews, family members and countless friends. Dave was predeceased by his brothers, Clarence and Frank, sisters Doris, Sarah and Baby Jean and his daughter, Lee Ann.

Dave earned his bachelor's degree from Western Maryland (McDaniel) College, Westminster, MD and his Master of Divinity from Crozer Chester Seminary, in Chester, PA. He began his call to the ministry as a United Methodist Minister at Aldine UMC, also serving at Pitman UMC, 4th UMC in Bridgeton and Hancock's Bridge UMC. Dave had the gift of evangelism and ministering to youth at Malaga Camp and IYPC Poco summer camps.

In 1958 Dave accepted the opportunity given to him by Paul Alger to host a live, daily radio show on WSNJ in Bridgeton. His original program, The Wondrous Story, has been heard every day for the past sixty-five years.

In 1962, Dave accepted a new calling and founded the nonprofit ministry of Ranch Hope, Inc. located on a 200-acre property in Alloway, New Jersey. With a heart full of compassion and unwavering faith, Dave embarked on a journey to uplift and transform the lives of children with the creation of this healing community, a sanctuary where countless hearts have found solace, strength, and the chance to rewrite their stories. The first youth arrived on May 5, 1964. For many years, Dave led the Ranch Hope Hopefuls, a Christian choral group that performed concerts throughout the Delaware Valley in support of Ranch Hope, Inc.

Dave loved Salem County where he lived his entire life. He served the greater community through the Wistarburg Ruritan Club, Rotary Club of Salem, Salem County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, Penns Grove Historical Society Board of Directors, Penns Grove Public Library Board of Directors, National Religious Broadcasters Association, Pennsville National Bank Board Member, South Seaville Camp Meeting Association Board and Little League Coach. Dave was an avid Philadelphia, Penn State, South Carolina, and Temple University sports fan as well as a fan of all of his grandchildren's activities.

A member of Aldine UMC, Dave continued to serve as a guest evangelist, hosting weekend retreats and pulpit supply to local churches throughout South Jersey up until his death. Dave was the embodiment of hope itself, a word he defined as "an expectation of success." In honoring his memory, let us continue to uphold the values he so passionately lived by, spreading love, kindness, and hope to all. In lieu of flowers, the family asks that you make donations in Dave's memory to Ranch Hope, Inc., PO Box 325, Alloway, New Jersey, 08001-0325.

A Memorial Visitation will be held on Friday night, February 16, 2024, from 4

until 7 PM at the Adams Funeral Home, 64 Broad St., Woodstown, NJ 08098. On Saturday morning, February 17, 2024, all services will be held at the Lee Ann Bailey Memorial Chapel, 45 Sawmill Rd. Alloway, NJ 08005. The memorial visitation will begin at 9:30 AM with the service starting at 11 AM. Burial will be private. www.adamsfuneralhome.org

Previous Events

Memorial Visitation

FEB 16. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Adams Funeral Home
64 Broad St.
Woodstown, NJ 08098
adamsfuneralhome@comcast.net

Memorial Visitation

FEB 17. 9:30 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Ranch Hope Chapel
45 Sawmill Rd.
Alloway, NJ 08001

CELEBRATION OF HIS LIFE:

FEB 17. 11:00 AM (ET)

Ranch Hope Chapel
45 Sawmill Rd.
Alloway, NJ 08001

Services on Saturday, February 17, 2024 will be lived streamed on the Ranch Hope Facebook Page starting at 11 AM.

Tribute Wall

KF

“ My sincerest condolences to the Bailey family. My first experience with Rev. Bailey was as a young boy. My father introduced me to him and explained there were a group of men, led by Rev. Dave Bailey and they were starting a school and facility in Alloway to help boys and young men who were troubled and needed guidance. My dad continued a friendship lasting for five decades. Shared fundraising efforts and continual friendship were traits of admiration our family was lucky enough to experience. During my juvenile years, I realized I did not want to have to go to Ranch Hope for Boys, but I sure loved listening any time Rev. Bailey spoke. My earliest experiences included sitting at my parents table, eating breakfast and listening to The Wondrous Story on radio station WSNJ. The Bible stories and music was never lost on me. To this day I am grateful for the friendship and the influence Rev. Bailey had on me as a young boy and young man. His greatest accomplishments in life have left a legacy for future generations to enjoy and reflect upon. That young person in the 1960s and 1970s still remembers. Thank you for your profound impact on countless lives, including mine.
Ken Freitag

Kenneth Freitag - March 07, 2024 at 04:47 PM

RM

I'm so sorry to hear the passing of someone who had such a positive impact on so many!

Rochelle Amadio (Norwood United Methodis - April 22, 2024 at 01:13 PM

RG

“ Belated condolences to the Bailey family and to those at Ranch Hope. It's been an honor to work with him and for him (even briefly). And there are bizarre (uh, bazaar) stories from years past I'll never forget. May he keep telling the heavenly saints those stories and jokes.

Rev. Robert Giercyk - February 27, 2024 at 05:49 PM

JC

“ Jennifer C. planted a grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Rev. David Lee Bailey Sr..

Jennifer C. - February 16, 2024 at 01:33 PM

BF

“ Our Condolences and Prayers from Education & Training Resources.

Brian Fox - February 16, 2024 at 12:09 PM

TF

“ The Hammond Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Rev. David Lee Bailey Sr..

The Hammond Family - February 15, 2024 at 09:09 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Rev. David Lee Bailey Sr..



February 15, 2024 at 09:09 PM

MM

“ Mannington Mills planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Rev. David Lee Bailey Sr..

Mannington Mills - February 15, 2024 at 06:33 PM

MM

“ Mannington Mills purchased the Sentiments of Serenity Spray for the family of Rev. David Lee Bailey Sr..



Mannington Mills - February 15, 2024 at 06:33 PM

CD

“ Celeste Riley and Rick Dawson planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Rev. David Lee Bailey Sr..

Celeste Riley and Rick Dawson - February 15, 2024 at 07:13 AM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Rev. David Lee Bailey Sr..



February 15, 2024 at 07:13 AM

LT

“ Dave Bailey (Rev) impacted some many lives. From the boys at Ranch Hope, to the community, to the countless churches where he peached, he left his legacy. We will always remember his sense of humor and his willingness to participate in everything. He was the president of Camp Meeting for years and always had a large following. Where Dave was, people gathered. He had a way of making you feel good and listening to your problems. Dave was a great friend. Although we are sad he has left us, we know that we will be reunited in Heaven. What a glorious day that will be! Lisa and Marcia Taylor

Lisa and Marcia Taylor - February 14, 2024 at 10:28 AM

RB

“ Robert, Bonnie, and Melinda Baker planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Rev. David Lee Bailey Sr..

Robert, Bonnie, and Melinda Baker - February 14, 2024 at 04:20 AM

RB

“ Robert, Bonnie, and Melinda Baker purchased the Joyful Memory for the family of Rev. David Lee Bailey Sr..



Robert, Bonnie, and Melinda Baker - February 14, 2024 at 04:20 AM

TM

“ My father was a close friend of Dave's and he introduced me to Dave when I was 17. I had never met any Pastor who could preach, tell stories and jokes and captivate my attention while drawing me closer to Jesus. Dave always made time to give me a call or stop in our shop in Stone Harbor to say hi or just make us laugh. Dave was an amazing man who we will all miss. What a blessing to have known him. Our deepest sympathies to Eileen and family.

Tom Markle

Tom Markle - February 13, 2024 at 07:57 PM

PF

“ I am so sorry to hear about Dave's passing. I was so blessed to have known him and Eileen for over 50 years and be part of many retreats and singing with sounds of Hope for the Ranch. Also being with him at the Pitman Methodist Church. Prayers and love to Eileen and the family.

Peggy Fredericks - February 13, 2024 at 03:07 PM

SF

“ Salem Health & Wellness Foundation purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Rev. David Lee Bailey Sr..



Salem Health & Wellness Foundation - February 13, 2024 at 11:13 AM

DS

“ I've known Dave and Eileen since 1962 and from the first introduction, I knew I would grow to love them more as they shared their dreams/plans for the futures of troubled youth who needed to know them, but more importantly, needed to know JESUS and HIS love. God broke the mould after HE made David Lee Bailey(Sr.). He and Eileen have been an example of love and respect for one another, a team of hope, always ready with a quip to make one laugh and ease a burden or just a phone call that would end with a beautiful heartfelt prayer. Dave was the best evangelist I first heard at a tent meeting set up at Pole Tavern 60 years ago. We saw Ranch Hope become a reality in 1962 and hope began to fill the hearts of many who believed in their mission. Lee Ann, Betty Jean, now known as Liz, and "the baby" David, Jr., were always a part of the events that took place at the Ranch and were loved sooo much!

My brother Bob and I joined the first choral group "The Hopefuls" at inception and we spread "Music with a Message" throughout NJ for several years, raising funds for "the Ranch," producing records and sharing the gospel in song with a wonderful group of Christian friends including Eileen, and Dave leading--always closing the program of gospel songs with Dave's solo "Lord, I'm Coming Home." So many precious memories come to mind that volumes could be written, but from someone who saw Dave with Eileen at his side walking the walk and being Jesus' hands and feet, it's an honor to be able to call you friends in Christ and yes, Dave, you made it Home and all of your faithful friends and family will join you there some bright morning when our lives are o'er; we'll fly away to a land where joy shall never end as we Hopefuls once sang and join that circle, many of whom are already there. Rest in eternal peace with our Savior and Lord and may your beloved Eileen and family feel the peace and comfort and hope that only comes from the Lord as you never forget the man, the dream and the hope he embodied and fulfilled. In the bonds of Jesus' love always, Dolly Black Strobel, Bend, Oregon.

Dolly Black Strobel - February 12, 2024 at 08:53 PM

JA

“ Knew Dave from Pitman Methodist as a young man and never forgot him! My condolences and prayers.

Jack Austin - February 12, 2024 at 08:36 PM

JE

“ Joe and Susie Eulo purchased the Medium Dish Garden for the family of Rev. David Lee Bailey Sr..



Joe and Susie Eulo - February 12, 2024 at 05:58 PM

JW

“ Prayers to the family and the many many people Rev. Bailey touched during his time here.
Many memories of Rev. Bailey during growing up at Hudson United Methodist Church in Pedricktown
Rest in Peace you well and faithful servant
Thank you for all you accomplished here to support us

janice west-belhadi - February 12, 2024 at 04:18 PM



“ Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Rev. David Lee Bailey Sr..



February 12, 2024 at 12:11 PM

PC

“ Patti and Bruce McFaull, Chayle and Cody planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Rev. David Lee Bailey Sr..

Patti and Bruce McFaull, Chayle and Cody - February 12, 2024 at 11:10 AM



“ A Full Life was purchased for the family of Rev. David Lee Bailey Sr..



February 12, 2024 at 11:10 AM

VV

“ I have known Reverend Bailey my whole life and he will be greatly missed by all. From his work at Ranch Hope and just being an amazing person he touched so many people and always with a smile. Deepest condolences to his family.

Vivian Vasta - February 11, 2024 at 05:24 PM

PH

“ My wife and I first met (“write that down”) Rev. Dave Bailey at Malaga Camp, at a Sunday morning church service at the Tabernacle. Dressed like Francis Asbury, Dave was riding on a horse across the grounds - just like the early Superintendent. As the summers passed, we got to know him and his Bride better, at Malaga and Seaville. Each encounter was a blessing to us. In August 2023, in Maui serving as a Chaplain, I met a stranger who shared a picnic table for lunch. After some introductions, we learned of our common connection to South Jersey...Dave Bailey, and the man had once worked at Ranch Hope. Dave’s example, I am sure, has spread around the world through the humanity he served. Praise God for Dave Bailey.

Phil Hannum - February 10, 2024 at 03:36 PM

NL

“ May his memory be a blessing,

Norman and Teresita Lenchitz - February 10, 2024 at 12:10 PM

IW

“ Eileen and family, I am so sorry to hear of Dave’s passing, he was such a nice, funny and dedicated to his faith. Dave was one guy in a million, always friendly to everyone. He will be missed by everyone. RIP Reverend ❤️❤️🙏

Isabella Weiss - February 10, 2024 at 09:46 AM



“ Carol Molinari Monks lit a candle in memory of David Bailey



Carol Molinari Monks - February 10, 2024 at 08:49 AM

ES

“ Lynn and I are Heartbroken. Just sat with Dave at Elmer Hospital and shared stories and laugh about Crazy things. What Joy to be with him that day.He called me a couple days later to have lunch. Just Love the whole Bailey Family for all they've done for so many others. We will Miss you Dave. ❤️❤️🙏🙏

Edward Suess - February 09, 2024 at 08:04 PM