



Dr. Gerald Derstine

October 13, 1928 - February 12, 2022

Dr. Gerald Derstine, 93, of Bradenton, Florida, stepped peacefully into glory on Saturday, Feb. 12, 2022. Serving more than 70 years in full-time ministry, he was the founder in 1968 of Christian Retreat Conference Center in Bradenton, and president of Gospel Crusade, Inc., a non-profit worldwide missions organization, for many years. He also was founder and director of Strawberry Lake Christian Retreat in Minnesota, North Country Christian Retreat in New York, and the Institute of Ministry in Bradenton. As director of Israel Affairs International, he established many churches and promoted peace throughout the Middle East.

Gerald was a pioneer in the Charismatic Renewal following an outpouring of the Holy Spirit on his Mennonite congregation in 1955. His autobiography, "Following the Fire," gives his account of the supernatural revival in Minnesota that changed the course of his life and catapulted him into a global ministry. He was noted for his balanced teaching on the Holy Spirit and the Kingdom of God. In addition to his Bible teaching programs on CBN and other TV networks, he was featured on many Christian television stations worldwide. He established numerous churches, including The Tabernacle in Sarasota, authored many books and publications over the years and has left a legacy that will continue to impact millions worldwide.

Born in Souderton, Pennsylvania, on Oct. 13, 1928, Gerald is preceded in

death by his parents, Willis and Naomi Derstine, and two brothers, Durrell and Willis. Gerald's late wife of 67 years, Beulah, went to be with the Lord in 2016. He is survived by his wife, Shirley (Nafziger); four children, Joanne Curphey (Bill), Phil Derstine (Jannette), Tim Derstine (Beverly), Steve Derstine (Brynn), 14 grandchildren; Jenifer Derstine, Tanya Gervais (Josh), Cori Edwards (Brian), Lauren Derstine, Amy Johnson (Justin), Michelle Derstine, Michael Derstine, Steven Derstine, Kiersten Hunter (Chris), Charles Hellier V, Stephanie Derstine, Christopher Derstine (Amelia), Avery Derstine, Rylan Derstine; and 12 great-grandchildren. He also is survived by Shirley's children; Tyler Nafziger, Tony Nafziger (Sandra), Todd Nafziger (Renae) and April Shallo (John); 13 grandchildren and 5 great-grandchildren.

A Celebration of Life will be held Sunday, Mar. 27, 2022, at 1 PM in the sanctuary at Christian Retreat, 1200 Glory Blvd., Bradenton, FL.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

MAR 27. 1:00 PM (ET)

Christian Retreat
1200 Glory Blvd.
Bradenton, FL

Tribute Wall

EW

“ Many years go back in 1972 my daddy Rodney Potter, and mama Minnie Potter, my sister and I moved onto a piece of property where my mama & I still are. Daddy is in heaven now... but the peacocks from Christian Retreat would come here, and it would take days for them to get here. Also days for them to go back! Mama would call Gerald and his wife to let them know that their peacocks 🦚 were on their way home lol. I was only 10.. I'm 59 now. Kind of a cute little story. There's no doubt anyone that knew Gerald knows right where he is now. Phil.. if you see this I just want you to know that I'm so sorry for the hurt you must feel losing your daddy. Even tho we know where our Daddy's are , and that we'll be with them again.. it's still hard being without them here. Your daddy was a wonderful man, he was so instrumental in so many people getting to be in heaven. I'm thankful for the small way i got to know him over the younger years of my life. I'll never forget him, or your mama, or you. Always,
Elizabeth

Elizabeth White - May 02, 2022 at 07:37 PM

DN

“ We were blessed to meet Brother and Sister Derstine at Strawberry Lake Retreat many years ago. What a wonderful couple they are! My husband has the Gerald Derstine Partner Edition Bible that he enjoys very much. We were able to sit with the Derstines and have lunch and fellowship with them. So glad we got to meet them on this side of heaven and will meet again later.

David and Nina Niedenfuer - March 21, 2022 at 06:22 AM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Dr. Gerald Derstine.



March 09, 2022 at 02:10 PM



“ I have been so blessed by Gerald Derstine . When was Born Again in 1978 I watched his ministry on the Christian TV station in Chicago. I learned about the tithe from him. God definitely used Gerald to bless me. I was able to visit Christian Retreat in Bradenton FL. He has a great legacy. Blessings to his family.

Joe Cali - March 05, 2022 at 05:08 PM



Gerald was a man that had great depth in the Word, prayer, Holy Spirit, and how to live life in Jesus. I met him at Strawberry Lake through Mark and Eva Landes. His legacy will live on because of Jesus. Love and blessings to the family.

Fran Mattson Roux - March 10, 2022 at 02:56 PM



no one in this world and in the kingdom will ever be like garald he was father to my wife efrocine and. I Israel a angel on the earth

israel - April 01, 2022 at 04:55 PM



I was just thinking of him today and thought I would check online only to find out he had passed. What a great man he was. His heart was as big as a mountian. He blessed so many people during his lifetime and I was one of them.

Wayne Miller - April 20, 2022 at 08:33 AM