



## The Rev. Dr. Nat Harrison Long

November 24, 1937 - May 10, 2006

Nathaniel Harrison Long was called to the ministry at age twelve while attending a Billy Graham crusade on the grounds of Ponce De Leon Park, home of the Atlanta Crackers Baseball Club. Nat overcame a mild case of cerebral palsy to become a dynamic preacher and beloved minister of the United Methodist Church. He served faithfully and powerfully as a member of the North Georgia Conference for over forty years. On Wednesday, May 10, Nat Long suddenly passed away at his home in Alpharetta. Born on November 24, 1937, the son of Dr. Nathaniel Guy Long and Olive Wills Long, Nat attended the Atlanta Public Schools until the ninth grade when he was enrolled at The Webb School in Bell Buckle, Tennessee. At Webb, he became President of the Hamiltonian Debating Society and was the first freshman in the history of the school to win the annual oratorical contest, a feat which earned him the nickname "preacher." Later, as an undergraduate at Emory University, Nat was elected President of the College Council and President of the Student Body. He also fell in love with Linda Lee Oliver. In 1961 they married, had two sons and ministered together until her tragic death in 1981. After graduating from Emory University, Nat received the Bachelor of Divinity and Master of Divinity from Drew University (cum laude) and the Master of Sacred Theology (Homiletics) from Yale Divinity School. In 1980, Nat returned to Emory where he received the Doctor of Ministry degree from The Candler School of Theology. In 1964 Nat was appointed to the Locust Grove Circuit (Locust Grove/New Hope/Philadelphia UMC's) of the North Georgia

Conference. In a career spanning from 1962 until his death, he served many fine United Methodist congregations including, McEachern Memorial, Acworth, Conyers First, St. James (Atlanta), and Alpharetta First. In addition, he presided as District Superintendent over the Atlanta College Park District and was a Reinhardt College Trustee for over 25 years. In June of 2000, Nat joyfully began a retirement appointment at Belvedere United Methodist Church. Inspired by this exceptional congregation, his preaching reached its zenith, exploring God's love through the compassion-based theology of universal salvation. Ironically, his current sermon series was entitled "Life After Death." Nat's retirement years heralded other wonderful rewards as well. The year 2003 saw his blissful union to Mary Catherine Harwell Long and the birth of his grandson Oliver Wilson Long. Throughout his ministry, Nat emphasized preaching and evangelism. His primary ministerial concerns were "outreach" and "in-reach." He diligently worked to include people from outside the church while reaching ever more deeply into the hearts of those within it. Using this philosophy, Nat helped many churches to grow in faith as well as membership. While Nat Long's public accomplishments are significant, they pale in comparison to his private acts. As a husband, father, son and friend, he was exceptionally generous, loving, kind and compassionate. He was a brilliant teacher, a perpetual student, an insatiable seeker and an exuberant lover of life. Nat Long is survived by a devoted and loving family: his wife, Mary Catherine Harwell Long; sons, Nathaniel Allen Long of Alpharetta and Harrison Oliver Long of Marietta; daughter-in-law, Melanie Martin Long; grandson, Oliver Wilson Long; stepdaughter, Cynthia Fortune Gruel of Warrenville, IL; sister, Olive Wills Long Kellum and brother-in-law, E. Owen Kellum of Alpharetta; brother, Dr. James Theodore Long and sister-in-law, Darlene Georgian Long of Los Angeles, CA; sister, Susan Manfrey Long Baker and brother-in-law, Bob Baker of Westerville, Ohio; cousins, John W. Long of Decatur and David Gurley of Oakwood; and numerous nieces and nephews. The service for The Reverend Dr. Nathaniel Harrison Long will be at 1 PM, Monday, May 15, at the Alpharetta First United Methodist Church

followed by a reception at the church. The Reverends Dr. Don Martin, E. Owen Kellum, and Dan Maxey will officiate, and Bishop Bevel Jones will deliver the sermon. The family will receive friends at Northside Chapel Funeral Home on Sunday, May 14, from 4-6 PM and 7-9 PM. There will be a private interment at Westview Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that memorials be sent to: Belvedere United Methodist Church, P. O. Box 1684, Decatur, GA 30031; Wesley Woods, 1821 Clifton Rd., NE, Atlanta, GA 30329; or The Webb School, P. O. Box 488, Bell Buckle, Tennessee 37020. Northside Chapel Funeral Directors has charge of arrangements. 770-645-1414.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

MAY 14. 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM (ET)

Northside Chapel Funeral Directors and Crematory  
12050 Crabapple Road  
Roswell, GA

## Visitation

MAY 14. 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM (ET)

Northside Chapel Funeral Directors and Crematory  
12050 Crabapple Road  
Roswell, GA

## Service

MAY 15. 1:00 PM (ET)

Alpharetta First United Methodist Church  
69 North Main Street  
Alpharetta, GA

# Tribute Wall



“ *The Rev. Dr. Nat Harrison Long*

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October 08, 2022 at 11:37 AM



“ *Much love and sympathy to the family in this difficult time. I am a member of the Nat Long Bible Class at McEachern Methodist in Power Springs. Enjoyed many uplifting sermons from Reverend Long.*

*Love and prayers,*

*Evie Walls##imported-begin##Evie Walls##imported-end##*

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May 14, 2006 at 09:08 AM