



Pastor Charles D. Brooks

July 24, 1930 - June 5, 2016

Evangelistic innovator. Trained hundreds of ministers in evangelism around the world. Longest serving GC Field Secretary. Brought more than 15,000 to Christ.

On June 5, 2016, retired Seventh-day Adventist evangelist C.D. Brooks passed to rest after a brief battle with pancreatic cancer. Brooks worked as a pastor, administrator, evangelist, and chaplain for the church since 1951 when he graduated from Oakwood College (now Oakwood University) in Huntsville, Alabama, with a degree in theology.

Brooks' first love was evangelism and he continued to conduct meetings after taking on the role of church administrator for the General Conference (GC), located in Silver Spring, Maryland. "Evangelism is the elixir that warms up a cold church," Brooks said, "the force that moves the members from standing on the premises to standing on the promises."

Daniel R. Jackson, president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America, shared his thoughts upon learning of Brooks' passing, "I am so sorry to hear of the passing of Elder Brooks. He was a great preacher and one of God's true saints. I have watched him walk the halls of our office and used to repeat in my head 'he is a prince among men.' I will miss him but one day

soon he will have eternal youth and live forever with his dear wife and family."

Charles Decatur (C.D.) Brooks was born in Greensboro, North Carolina, on July 24, 1930, the tenth child of Marvin and Mattie Brooks. Although Methodists at the time, shortly after C.D.'s birth the Brooks family began observing the seventh-day Sabbath in honor of a pledge Mattie Brooks made to God while in a hospital bed suffering from a near-fatal illness. Learning more truth years later from reading *The Great Controversy*, C.D., along with his mother and six sisters, was baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist Church on a Sabbath in 1940. In 1947 after attending an evangelistic tent meeting, C.D. remained under the tent long after the last person had departed. "Charles, I want you to make truth clear," C.D. distinctly heard a voice say, and then had a vision of himself standing behind the pulpit at the front of the tent, proclaiming the truth with power and clarity. Brooks immediately jettisoned his career plans for dentistry for the ministry, setting his sights on Oakwood.

At Oakwood, Brooks met the love of his life, Walterene Wagner, daughter of John H. Wagner, Sr., a stalwart of 20th century black Adventism. Along with other roles, Walter was the first president of Allegheny Conference, one of the five inaugural leaders of regional conferences in 1945.

Brooks heard God speak for the second time in his life when a voice said to him, concerning Walterene, "Charles, this is the young lady you will marry." The two were united in marriage on September 14, 1952, at the Ebenezer Seventh-day Adventist Church in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. C.D. served the Columbia Union as a pastor, evangelist and administrator until 1971, working mostly in Pennsylvania, Delaware, New Jersey, and Ohio.

In 1971 C.D. Brooks was asked by General Conference President Robert Pierson to serve as a field secretary for the Seventh-day Adventist world

church, a role he held until 1995, making him the longest tenured field secretary in church history. While serving at the GC, Brooks took on the dual role as speaker/director for the Breath of Life Ministry, a new television ministry of the GC that was produced at the Adventist Media Center in Thousand Oaks, California. Brooks partnered with Walter Arties, Louis B. Reynolds, and the Breath of Life Quartet to produce television programming that reached out to audiences all around the world. As speaker-director of Breath of Life, Brooks took his place among legendary Adventist media revolutionaries such as H.M.S. Richards, George Vandeman, William Fagal. In 1989 the ministry was broadcast on Black Entertainment Television (BET), and reached a potential audience of more than 90 million people a week.

Brooks was speaker-director of Breath of Life Ministries for 23 years, from 1974 to 1997. In his time at the helm, the ministry brought approximately 15,000 people to Christ, established 15 Breath of Life congregations, and was viewed by untold millions.

In 1996 health challenges forced Brooks to retire from the General Conference and in 1997 he stepped down as speaker-director for Breath of Life. Brooks had a long and productive retirement and in 2007, in honor of E.E. Cleveland, Charles Bradford, and C.D. Brooks, the Bradford-Cleveland-Brooks Leadership Center (BCBLC) was established. The center is housed on the campus of Oakwood University in a 10,000-square-foot, \$2.5 million state-of-the-art edifice.

On December 1, 2010, the Ellen G. White Estate elected Brooks a lifetime member of the Ellen G. White Estate Board. The North American Division invited Brooks to be its chaplain in residence in 2013, a position he held until his death.

Elder C.D. Brooks is survived by his beloved wife of almost 64 years, Walterene, his children Diedra and Charles II "Skip", and three grandchildren, two boys and a girl.

—Prepared by the North American Division Office of Communication, with information gleaned from a life sketch of C.D. Brooks written by Benjamin Baker, Ph.D. [Click here to read the entire life sketch.](#)

Cemetery Details

Gate Of Heaven Cemetery

13801 Georgia Ave
Silver Spring, MD 20906

Previous Events

Wake

JUN 12. 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM (ET)

Sligo Seventh Day Adventist
7700 Carroll Ave
Takoma Park, MD 20912

Service

JUN 12. 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM (ET)

Sligo Seventh Day Adventist
7700 Carroll Ave
Takoma Park, MD 20912

Tribute Wall



“ *Pastor Charles D. Brooks*

October 13, 2022 at 08:33 AM



“ *I came in contact with the powerful poignant voice of Pastor Brooks at the age 16 when I listened to his sermon Naaman the Leper. From then on my spiritual life was never the same. I would write short sermons and try to imitate preaching like him. He touched my life to a point that I shared with many of my friends the sermons of this great man of God. To know that he rests in the Lord awaiting that glorious morning which he so much and emphatically echoed in his sermons around the world, is so fulfilling to me. I never met him in person, but I long and will certainly look for him and meet him at the sea of glass to relate this testimony.*



Chileshe Mulenga - September 05, 2018 at 09:44 AM

TA

“ I am from Zimbabwe and since I got to know of Brooks, I never stopped listening to his powerful sermons! This man's work speak for him even today! My father-in-law and I used to listen much and talk about CD Brooks' sermons and a retired pastor, listening to such powerful sermons was and is always refreshing to him. I prayed and hoped to meet him in America and when I got news that he had died, I couldn't stop crying...what a man! what a life! what a woman who stood firm beside this man until his mission was ended!! I too am a pastor's wife and Walterene's love and help towards her husband echoed throughout all his sermons. I watched the funeral service and my heart bled all over again but I am thankful that he did not preach in vain, we shall meet him once again UP IN GLORY, immortal and new in Christ, singing the song of the Moses and the LAMB!!
May Diedre and Skip be comforted by this truth too, may they hold up every word of our eternal Father's Word like their father and thus our reunion is sure!
Skip looks so much like his father, I pray that beholding him constantly is a sweet comfort to Walterene!
God bless you all and keep strengthening you in his grace!

taffy - July 13, 2018 at 04:45 AM

TN

“ I listen to Pastor C D Brooks weekly, his inspired sermons live on. He never preached sweet sounding sermons that lulled sinners into self satisfaction. He preached the present truth, addressing pertinent subjects relevant for our times. May the Almighty God be with his family. Let us all hold on to the blessed hope. The soon coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Pastor C D Brooks lifted Christ for over six decades. What a Man! What a Preacher! Dedicated to the great commission. "Good ye therefore....."

Thabo Nnena - April 29, 2017 at 07:31 AM

RP

“ *First heard of this great man of God, a teenager growing up in Zimbabwe. Fell in love with the messages he preached and I've never looked back. God used this man to guide us, warn us of coming deceptions and brought many in my family to repentance. I cherish the blessed hope of seeing him again someday soon. May the Good Lord comfort his surviving family until then. With respect,*
Rita Paunganwa

Rita Paunganwa - September 24, 2016 at 05:51 AM

NG

“ *NO NOSENCE, NO UNCOMPROMISING, HONEST, TRUTHFUL, PLAIN, CONSIDERATE, ADORABLE, "OUTSPOKEN", RESPECTFUL TO ALL AND THE BEST AND NO. 1 SPEAKER IN THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH, NONE BEFORE HIM OR AFTER HIM,, HIS HONEST, SERIOUS AND DOWN-TO-EARTH SERMONS UNDOUBTEDLY HELPED ME ALONG MY CHRISTIAN JOURNEY.... MAY HIS SOUL REST IN PEACE. HANG INTHERE MRS. BROOKS ... WALTERINE BROOKS.*

ngel - August 12, 2016 at 04:00 AM

GY

“ *I rarely stand in a long line to shake a speaker's hand, but did so when Elder Brooks came to South Atlantic Conference Campground a few years ago. I had recently become an Adventist. Listening to WBAJ, his messages always inspired me, especially about marriage. He made the truth about marriage change my views and realize just how much God loves us all.*

God Keep you and Bless you - June 25, 2016 at 02:00 PM

BF

“ Growing up as a Caucasian Roman Catholic in Pittsburgh, Pa, Protestant preaching was like a foreign language. But Pastor Brooks spoke so eloquently, so powerfully, so masterfully, he was water to a dry and thirsty ground. My spirit would rise up as the truths presented to me made me feel as though I could burst with the grace and truth I was receiving.

I loved Pastor Brooks. I was privileged to shake his hand once at a Pennsylvania camp meeting. I know that Jesus is my rock and my foundation that will never be moved, but my world is rocked and saddened by the news of this Great Servant falling asleep in Jesus. He was a go to guy. There are soo few of them.

Bill Fehl, Spartanburg, SC

Bill Fehl - June 24, 2016 at 09:44 PM

JS

“ What a powerful man of God. His voice was one of the first I heard that bought the Adventist message on the radio. May our wonderful Lord bring you comfort. Jean Smith, SC

Jean Smith - June 12, 2016 at 04:10 PM

CC

“ *Pastor C.D. Brooks was truly a man of God and the Pastor that lead to my conversion. That was some 20 plus years ago in Tampa, Florida. Since that time he has always held a special place in my heart like none other.*

Thanks to social media I have, and Lord willing, will be able to hear his sermons until Jesus comes for me. Forever grateful 🍷

To his family: be comforted by the Words of Isaiah 57:1,2...Sister Cathye Cooper, Tampa, Fla.



cathye cooper - June 11, 2016 at 05:26 PM

SW

“ *I'm sadden by the loss of Pastor Brooks. He had a positive impact on my life! I watched him faithfully and gained so much knowledge of the Bible. I'm thankful to my niece for the collection of his sermons I will forever cherish them. My deepest sympathy to his family. May God bless and keep you is my prayer. S. Walker*

sylvia walker - June 10, 2016 at 08:48 PM



“ *We the March Family and Staff wish to extend our deepest and heartfelt sympathy in the passing of your loved one. Our prayers go out to you and your family in your time of loss. We know and understand that you have received many expressions of love and we will continue to lift you up in prayer. May the memories you cherish of brighter and happier days help to ease your sorrow and comfort you always.*

March Funeral Homes - June 08, 2016 at 10:48 AM