



James Otis Alford
1945 - 2005

James O. Alford
"Rev"

May 23 1945 - Mar 5 2005
AAFA #1088

THE
LAUDERDALE
VOICE

50¢

Wednesday, March 9, 2005

Serving all of Lauderdale County

Ripley, Tenn.

Reverend James O. Alford

Reverend James O. Alford, 59, Minister of First United Methodist Church of Ripley, of Ripley, died Saturday, March 5, at his home. Services were at 11 a.m., on Tuesday, March 8, at First United Methodist Church with burial on Wednesday in Middle Tennessee Veterans Cemetery. Garner Funeral Home has charge. He was a member of the Memphis Annual Conference of United Methodist Churches, the Lauderdale County Ministerial Alliance, the board of directors of the West Tennessee Emmaus Community, the board of directors of the Exchange Club Tina Turner Family Center, a volunteer chaplain at Baptist Memorial Hospital-Lauderdale, and a Paul Harris Fellow in the Ripley Rotary Club. An Army Veteran, he saw active duty during the Vietnam War and received many medals. Rev. Alford, the husband of Pat Alford, also leaves two sons, Rev. Scott Alford of Collierville and Mark Alford of Mt. Juliet; his mother, Violet Alford of Owensboro, Ky.; a brother Robert Alford of Owensboro, and two grandchildren. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that any memorials be sent to Lakeshore United Methodist Assembly, 1458 Pilot Knob Rd., Eva, TN 38333-6097.

Ripley First Methodist pastor dies of cancer

by Annie Laura Jennings

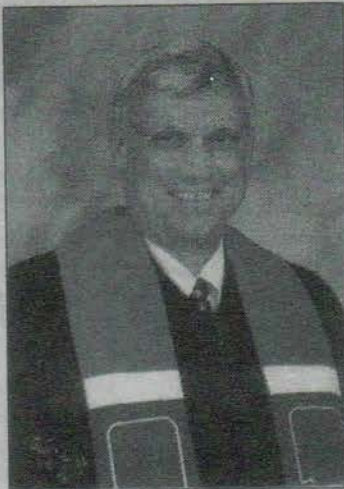
Rev. James O. Alford died of cancer early Saturday morning, March 5, at his home in Ripley. He was the minister of First United Methodist Church in Ripley, having served there since June 1998.

Alford, a native of Owensboro, Ky., was a graduate of Kentucky Wesleyan College and received his Master of Divinity from Memphis Theological Seminary.

He was ordained as Elder in the United Methodist Church in 1988. He served Mt. Pleasant-New Hope in Lauderdale County from 1983-1986. He also served the Brownsville Circuit, South Pleasant Grove, Trinity Antioch and Benton First.

An Army Veteran, he saw active duty during the Vietnam War and received many medals.

Alford was very active in the civic life of Lauderdale County. He was a member of the Ripley



Rev. Jim Alford

Rotary Club, receiving the honor of Paul Harris Fellow. He served on the board of directors of the Exchange Club Tina Turner Center and participated in several stage productions in Ripley. He was very active in the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life and was recently honored at the Hee-Haw Show.

He worked with the Laud-

erdale County Ministerial Alliance and served as a volunteer chaplain at Baptist Memorial Hospital-Lauderdale. He was a member of the board of directors of the West Tennessee Emmaus Community.

Rev. Alford is survived by his wife, Pat; two sons, Rev. Scott Alford of Collierville and Mark Alford of Mt. Juliet; his mother, Violet Alford and one brother, Robert Alford, both of Owensboro.

Funeral services were held on Tuesday, March 8, at the First United Methodist Church with burial on Wednesday at the Middle Tennessee Veterans Cemetery in Nashville. Garner Funeral Home had charge. The family requests memorials be sent to Lakeshore United Methodist Assembly, 1458 Pilot Knob Rd., Eva, Tenn. 38333-6097.

For complete obituary, see page 2.

JAMES OTIS ALFORD
May 23, 1945 – March 5, 2005

On May 23, 1945, Jim Alford entered this world in Owensboro, Kentucky, as the first child of Marvin and Violet Alford. He was later graced with a brother, Robert. Owensboro was Jim's home until April of 1966 when he enlisted in the United States Army. His family began its expansion on December 17, 1967, when he married Patricia Hass of Russell, Minnesota. Jim and Pat had two children, Scott and Mark. For the last six years of his life, he spent time spoiling two grandchildren, Madison and Evan, and in his last year he was anticipating the adoption of his third grandchild from China.

Jim was always proud of his military service, which included four years of active duty and eight years in the Kentucky National Guard. During his time in the service, he graduated from the Infantry Officer Candidate School, the Armor Officer Advanced Course, and the United States Army Command and General Staff College. While on active duty, Jim served in Vietnam from June of 1968 through May of 1969, earning the Bronze Star, among other awards. He ultimately attained the rank of Major.

Jim also worked several years in the radio business. For WVJS-WSTO in Owensboro, he worked as Traffic Manager and Production Manager, and for WDXR in Paducah, he was employed as Sales Manager. In fact, one of his children's fond memories of his days in radio was when they were able to hear him on the air.

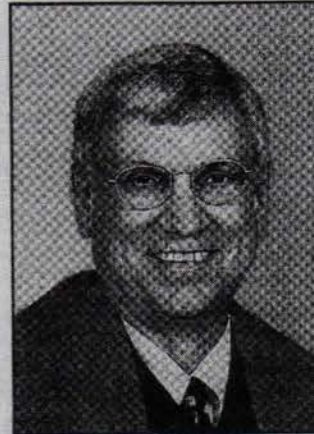
Jim began sensing a call to ministry while in high school and preached his first sermon at the age of 16 at his home church, Woodlawn UMC in Owensboro. However, it was in 1982 that he fully realized his calling and started the candidacy program. He had earned his Bachelor of Arts from Kentucky Wesleyan College a few years earlier and earned a Master of Divinity from Memphis Theology Seminary in 1986. While Jim was proud of his military service, his service as a minister was most rewarding to him. He touched the lives of many people throughout his years of ministry at Mt. Pleasant-New Hope, the Brownsville Circuit, South Pleasant Grove, Trinity-Antioch, Benton First, and Ripley First.

Sports were a passion of Jim's. He really loved the game of baseball, especially the St. Louis Cardinals, and was able to see them play in the 1982 World Series. Another favorite game was golf, and for several years the monthly golf scrambles with other clergy became a great source of fellowship for him.

Jim was active in many organizations. He was a Paul Harris Fellow in the Rotary Club and was also very supportive of Relay for Life and the Emmaus movement, where he served as Spiritual Director for several Walks and on the Board of Directors for the West Tennessee Emmaus Community.

Jim Alford, a loving son and brother, an adored husband, a devoted father and grandfather, and a faithful minister, entered the Church Expectant on March 5, 2005, with his family at his bedside. His departing words were of what he displayed to his family throughout his life. "I love you all very much," he said.

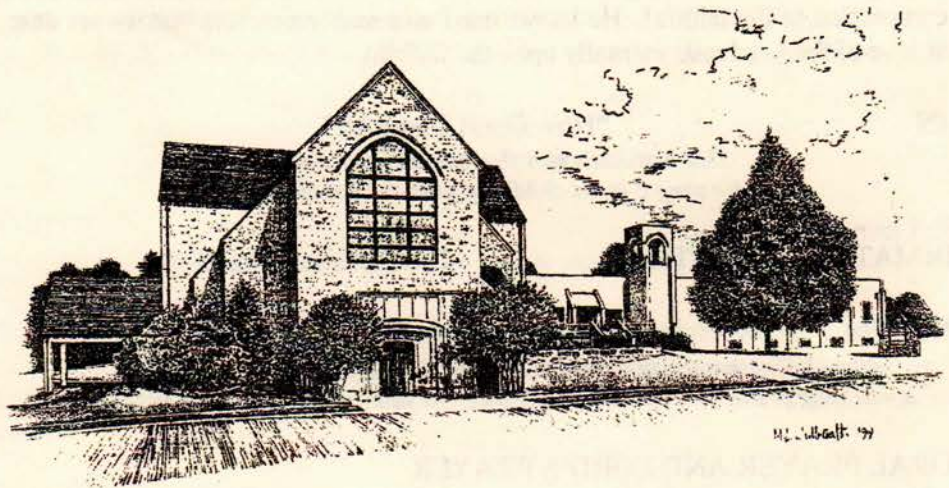
A Service of Death and Resurrection was held at Ripley First with Dr. Cecil Bellew and Rev. Jim Calhoun presiding. Jim's body was laid to rest in the Middle Tennessee Veterans Cemetery with military honors.



--Rev. Scott Alford

**A SERVICE OF WORSHIP
CELEBRATING THE LIFE, DEATH, AND RESURRECTION
OF**

THE REVEREND JAMES O. ALFORD



**Ripley First United Methodist Church
March 8, 2005
11:00 a.m.**

**A SERVICE OF WORSHIP
CELEBRATING THE LIFE, DEATH, AND RESURRECTION
OF
THE REVEREND JAMES O. ALFORD**

OPENING VOLUNTARY

“Holy, Holy, Holy!”

WORDS OF GRACE

Adapted from Psalm 103

Let us bless the Lord with all that is within us. For God forgives all our sins, heals all our diseases, redeems our lives from the pit, and crowns us with steadfast love and mercy. The Lord is slow to anger and is filled with justice. Just as a father shows compassion to his children, God shows compassion to the faithful. He knows our frame and remembers that we are dust. But the steadfast love of the Lord rests eternally upon the faithful.

+HYMN

“How Great Thou Art”

77

*This was Jim's very first solo in a worship service.
He sang it in his childhood church, Woodlawn UMC.*

+AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

The Apostles' Creed

881

AN ANTHEM

“Majesty”

Choir

*This was the first anthem Jim heard the Ripley First choir sing.
It was sung at the 1998 Annual Conference, the year he was appointed to Ripley First.*

PASTORAL PRAYER AND LORD'S PRAYER

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Psalm 121

This was Jim's favorite Psalm.

+GOSPEL READING

John 14:1-7

This text was used for Jim's first sermon. It was preached at Woodlawn UMC, October 22, 1961

SERMON

Rev. Cecil Bellew

+HYMN

“Because He Lives”

364

Jim sang this as a solo many times.

NAMING AND WITNESS

Mr. David Jarrell, Jim's cousin

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

In unison

God of love and grace,
we thank you for all with which you have blessed us:
for the gift of joy in the days of health and strength
and for the gift of your comfort and healing in the days of pain and grief.
We praise you for the life of Jim Alford,
a devoted husband,
a loving father,
and a caring grandfather.
O Lord, he served you faithfully,
preaching your Word,
administering the sacraments,
and ordering the life of the church.
Receive Jim into your arms of mercy
and into the eternal rest of everlasting peace
that he might rejoice with all the company of your saints. Amen.

+HYMN

“Hymn of Promise”

707

This was another favorite hymn for Jim.

+BENEDICTION

Adapted from Psalm 91

Jim closed his first sermon in 1961 by reading this Psalm.

Those who dwell in the shadow of Almighty God will say, “My refuge and my fortress; my God, in whom I trust.” We need not fear, because we love God. He will deliver and protect us. When we call to God, he will answer. He will be with us in trouble, and God will satisfy us with life and salvation.

CLOSING VOLUNTARY

“A Mighty Fortress Is Our God”

+ stand as you are able

Ministers: Rev. Cecil Bellew and Rev. Jim Calhoun

Musician: Mr. Bill Kelly

Choir: Ripley First UMC, Mr. Harley Patterson directing

Pall Bearers: Rev. Steve Cavitt, Dr. Johnny Jeffords, Rev. Larry Kendrick,
Rev. Gary Lawson, Rev. Dan Leslie, Rev. Sky Lowe-McCracken

Honorary Pall Bearers: Clergy of the Memphis Annual Conference

THE REVEREND JAMES O. ALFORD
May 23, 1945 – March 5, 2005

Birthplace

Owensboro, Kentucky

Education

Bachelor of Science from Kentucky Wesleyan College
Master of Divinity from Memphis Theological Seminary

Family

Husband of Pat Alford
Father of Scott Alford and Mark Alford
Grandfather of Madison Alford and Evan Alford

He also leaves his mother, Violet Alford, and his brother, Robert Alford.
His father, Marvin Alford, preceded him in death.

Appointments in the Memphis Annual Conference

Ordained Deacon and received on Probation in 1985
Ordained Elder and received into Full Connection in 1988

1983 Mt. Pleasant-New Hope
1986 Brownsville Circuit
1990 South Pleasant Grove
1993 Trinity-Antioch
1995 Benton First
1998 Ripley First

Interment

Middle Tennessee Veterans Cemetery, Nashville

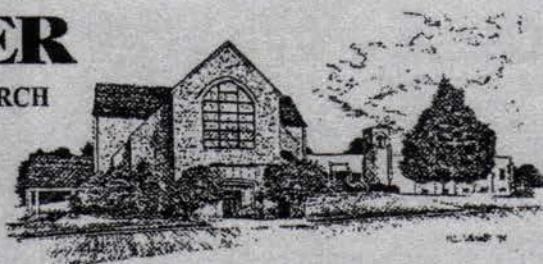
The family requests gifts in memory of Rev. Jim Alford be sent to:

Lakeshore United Methodist Assembly
1458 Pilot Knob Road
Eva, TN 38333

THE INFORMER

RIPLEY FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Church Office: (731) 635-0821
Activities Building: (731) 635-9097
Fax: (731) 635-4890
www.ripleyfumc.com



"Into the Word and beyond our boundaries . . ."

March 9, 2005

Rev. James O. Alford, Pastor

A MAN NAMED JIM

About 7 years ago, a man named Jim
came to First United Methodist
to teach us about "Him."

He came with the gospel and
the love of music, sports, laughter and
a great big grin.

He taught us humility, the love for
each other, and to abhor any kind of sin.
He helped in the community whenever asked.

Jim never said no, only what do you need
and when and where should I go?

He became sick but he still went on
with the courage and strength he
had always shown.

He's now with the Lord with a brand new body
and pain free.

He's walking along those streets of gold and
he's got the heavenly angels laughing and
singing as only he would be.

Our congregation is better and stronger, a big family
who will help each other get through this
no matter how grim.

All because of the love of the Lord and
a man named Jim.

Anne Paris
FUMC Ripley

PATRICIA ALFORD

*2406 Betsy Ross Drive
Mt. Juliet, Tennessee 37122
615-773-7224*

August 30, 2005

Earline Alford
427 Wheatridge
Mesquite, TX 75150

Dear Earline:

Thank you for your request for a picture and remembrances of my husband, Rev. James O. Alford. I'm not sure how much you would like or even the type of material you include. For James, there was much written. Please use what you wish of the materials I have enclosed.

The picture I have enclosed was taken in January 2005, just prior to his death on March 5, 2005. I would like for you to return it to me.

Sincerely,

Patricia Alford

Patricia Alford