



Harold Ray Kerley

November 25, 1942 - November 7, 2023

Harold Ray Kerley went to be with the Lord on November 7, 2023, at 6:24 pm. Life for Harold Ray Kerley began on November 25, 1942 in Waukegan, IL. His parents were Hubert Ray Kerley and Helen Rose (Stewart) Kerley. Ray (as he was known to everyone) lived in North Chicago, IL until the family moved to Southern Illinois. The Kerley's were a hard working farm family.

Ray grew up living the farm life. He was an active member of Gilead Presbyterian Church in Simpson, IL. He attended school in Simpson, IL and graduated in 1960 from Vienna High School in Vienna, IL.

His senior year of high school he worked at Mount Funeral Home in Vienna, IL. After graduation from high school he moved to Waukegan, IL and went to work at Coca Cola Bottling Co. In 1965 "Uncle Sam" called him to the U.S. Army. He served in Ft. Leonard Wood, MO, Ft. Sill, OK, Ft. Chaffee, AR and Vietnam. In his early years, Ray ran a Clark Oil station in Waukegan IL. Later he worked at Dill Brothers Welding, Kramer's Kampers, & Berens Moving & Storage. He worked at Abbott Laboratories in North Chicago and retired from there in 2008.

In June 1967, he married Sylvia Irene Fowler at the Midland Heights Methodist Church in Ft. Smith, AR. They moved to Park City, IL. During their years together they purchased homes in Winthrop Harbor, IL and then

Pleasant Prairie, WI.

Ray and Sylvia loved the Lord and treasured their time doing his work. They attended Lakeview Church in Zion, IL for many years. Ray was active on the church board where he served as treasurer. He enjoyed helping with projects around the church. Later they attended Immanuel Baptist Church in Kenosha, WI.

Ray & Sylvia were blessed with two sons, Kevin Ray (44) and Kent Ryan (42). Both married awesome women that were like his own daughters (Samantha Kerley, Taylor Kerley). They also were blessed with three grandchildren, Jaxson (14), Ashlynn (11) and Atlee (3).

In 2008, they retired and moved to Goreville, IL to be near his parents and family. Ray always wanted to be involved in something. He enjoyed working at the Goreville Ministerial Alliance. There he helped organize the food pantry and organize other areas as needed. In 2012 he was Goreville Man of the Year. After retiring to Southern IL, they attended the 1st Baptist Church in Goreville for several years and then started attending Lake of Egypt Christian Church in Marion, IL. They loved serving at that church. Ray served on the board as a trustee and helped with many projects including the fellowship hall and the expansion at the front of the church. They loved that church, the friends they made and especially Pastor Waggoner and his wife, Barbara. It was very hard to leave that area, but in 2019, his sons decided that their parents needed to move back to Kenosha. Sylvia was in a wheelchair and had some health issues making it necessary to be closer to their family. They moved into a condo in Kenosha. Several years later they purchased a home in Kansasville, WI to be nearer their sons. They started going to Southport Baptist in Kenosha WI but were not able to attend very often because of health issues.

Ray loved to make things for his home and enjoyed woodworking. He made things for his family and grandchildren that they still use today. During the last several years, Ray enjoyed living out his daily life tending to the yard, home and spending time with his family. It was such a blessing to have a family that cares. God is so good.

He was preceded in death by his parents and his brothers, Donald Eugene Kerley and Ronald Glenn Kerley (Roma). Ray is survived by his beloved wife of 56 years, Sylvia, his two sons, Kevin Ray (Samantha) Kansasville, WI and Kent Ryan (Taylor) Union Grove, WI, his 3 grandchildren, Jaxson, Ashlynn and Atlee and his sister-in-law, Lois (the late Don) Kerley (Vienna, IL) and many cousins, nephews and nieces.

A joint graveside service honoring the lives of Harold Ray Kerley and Sylvia Irene (Fowler) Kerley will be held on Saturday, February 24, 2024 at Gilead Cemetery (4356 Gilead Church Road, Simpson IL 62985) at 11:00am. Pastor Leroy Waggoner will officiate.

The family will receive relatives and friends from 10:30 A.M. until the service time.

Military honors will be accorded by the Beggs-Gurley VFW Post # 5222 and the Illinois National Guard Burial Honors Detail.

Memorials may be made to the Gilead Cemetery Fund or to the Lake of Egypt Christian Church

Cemetery Details

Gilead Cemetery

4385 Gilead Church Road
Simpson, IL

Previous Events

Gathering of Family & Friends

FEB 24. 10:30 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Gilead Cemetery
4385 Gilead Church Road
Simpson, IL

Graveside Service

FEB 24. 11:00 AM (CT)

Gilead Cemetery
4385 Gilead Church Road
Simpson, IL

Tribute Wall



“ *Sweet Tenderness was purchased for the family of Harold Ray Kerley.* ”



February 07, 2024 at 09:15 PM