



## Mr. Sammie Lee Key

March 7, 1939 - May 21, 2015

KEY, Mr. Sammie Lee - Age 76, passed away Thursday, May 21, 2015 at Beaumont Hospital -Royal Oak, MI. Family hour 12 p.m. Friday, May 29, 2015 at Fairhaven Seventh-Day Adventist Church, G-1379 W. Louis Ave., with memorial service commencing at 1 p.m. Family and friends will assemble at the church 12 p.m. Friday. Mr. Key will lie in state in the Chapel of Lawrence E. Moon Funeral Home, 906 W. Flint Park Blvd. and may be viewed from 4 p.m.- 8 p.m. Thursday only.

Mr. Sammie Lee Key was born in Hickman, Arkansas on March 7, 1939 to Lawrence and Eddie Mae (Waters) Key. He grew up in Dowagiac, Michigan, and graduated from Dowagiac High School. Sam loved music and basketball. He received a full classical music scholarship to attend Western Michigan University. Determined to play collegiate basketball, he transitioned to the basketball team as a walk-on, and later became Captain, fulfilling his dream.

Hardwired by the Creator with the gift of teaching, he received his Master's of Education from California State University Los Angeles, while working for the United States Postal Service. Sam taught elementary school for the Los Angeles school system. He later traveled to Europe to play professional basketball in Belgium. During his eight-year stay in Belgium, Sam was the Assistant Principal, Teacher, and Basketball Coach for the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) schools. Upon returning to the

States, he began doctoral studies at the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor, and worked at General Motors Engine Plant in Flint. The pull of the classroom was ever-present, and he retired from General Motors to begin a twenty-three-year season of educating children in the Flint School District.

After retirement, he continued to teach at the University of Michigan-Flint School of Education, evaluating and preparing student teachers to mold young minds. Sam was never one to be idle; he was always learning, sharing, and encouraging. He worked as a Substance Abuse Counselor at Insight and Columbia Aire, and as an Academic Counselor at Mott Community College.

Mr. Sammie Lee Key gave his life to Christ at an early age, and later in life joined the Seventh Day Adventist Church. As a member of 1st Flint, Eternal Life and Fairhaven churches, he served faithfully as an Elder, Sabbath School Superintendent, Teacher, and Prison Ministries Leader. Sam's greatest passion was studying and sharing the Word of God. Sam loved being with his family, playing and watching basketball, and playing racquetball. He also enjoyed reading, listening to classical music, journaling, having fun with friends and teaching. He was known as "Coach" to many.

Mr. Sammie Lee Key passed away peacefully in the arms of Jesus and his beloved wife of 36 years, Judith, after a courageous two-and-a-half-year battle with cancer. He touched the lives of many people around the world with his beautiful smile, his passion for Christ, his gift of teaching, patience, gentle spirit, and love. He will be truly missed by family, friends, students, and associates. We bow our heads in submission and lift our hearts in praise to God for the life of this wonderful man. May we live our lives in a way that reflects his legacy, and renew our commitment to join him on the "sea of glass" to hear the words "well done, good and faithful servant."

Mr. Sammie Lee Key leaves to cherish his memory and carry on his legacy:

wife, Judith Peck Key of Mt. Morris, MI; 3 daughters, Darlynda (David) Bogle of Columbia, MD, Kimberlee Key of Greenbelt, MD, and Debra McKinney of Starkville, MS; 4 sons, Michael (Erin) Key of Waldorf, MD, Steven (Janka) Key of Germany, Joshua (Jennifer) Key of Dallas, TX, and Jonathan Key of Mt. Morris, MI; 12 grandchildren, Brandon Bogle, Evan Bogle, Ryan Bogle, Jalen Ross, Ashli Harrison, Ryann McGee and Rodney McGee, Jr., all of Maryland; Brickney Gregory, of Georgia, Tayler Key, Kendal Key and Kammeron Key, all of California, Sidney Key and Noah Key, both of Germany, Asher Key of Texas, Amaya Key of Canada, Edwardo Gibson of Illinois; 5 great-grandchildren; 3 sisters, Dorothy Bailey of Niles, MI, Robin Key of California and Rhonda Key-Mobley of Florida; brother, Johnnie (Donna) Northern of Detroit, MI; 8 nieces, Tinita Matthews, Carol (Tolland) Jennings, and Jamie Mincy, all of Georgia, Darecia Scott of California, Shiedah (Jason) Smith of Michigan, Celeste Northern of New York, Kiandra (Wayne) Johnson of Georgia, and Victoria Witherspoon of California; 5 nephews, Darrell Williams of California, Edward Murray, Al Kynte Smith, Steve (Jackie) Little, all of Michigan; aunt, Flora Waters of Dowagiac, of Michigan; cousins, James (Nancy) Waters, Leroy Waters, all of Benton Harbor, MI, Larry (Adrienne) Waters of Milwaukee, WI and Thelma Holmes of Arkansas; 3 sisters-in-law, Margaret Wren of Flint, LaVada Dean of Farmington Hills, MI and Tammy Peck of Atlanta, GA; a host of other relatives, friends, heart-children and friends including special friends, Shelton and Gloria Davison of Flint, Joseph and Marva Williams of Kissimmee, FL, Murphy Riley, James and Chrisele Green, all of Flint, and Paula (Russell) Davis of Orlando, FL.

Mr. Sammie Lee Key was preceded in death by his parents, Lawrence Key, Eddie Mae Sanders; grandmother, Annie Mae Waters; sister, Helen Holloway; mother-in-law, Joyce Little.

The family would like to express special thanks to the staff of William

Beaumont Hospital Royal Oak 4th, 5th and Hospice floors and our angel, Dr. Tejas Cuchelkar.

# Previous Events

## Public Viewing

MAY 28. 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Lawrence E. Moon Funeral Home Chapel, Flint  
906 W. Flint Park Blvd.  
Flint, MI 48505  
(810) 789-MOON (6666)  
lemoonfhflint@gmail.com  
<http://www.lawrenceemoonfuneralhome.com>

## Family hour

MAY 29. 12:00 PM (ET)

Fairhaven Seventh-Day Adventist Church  
G-1379 W. Louis Ave.  
Flint, MI 48505  
<http://fairhavensda.org/index.htm>

## Memorial Service

MAY 29. 1:00 PM (ET)

Fairhaven Seventh-Day Adventist Church  
G-1379 W. Louis Ave.  
Flint, MI 48505  
<http://fairhavensda.org/index.htm>

# Tribute Wall



“ *Mr. Sammie Lee Key*

October 09, 2023 at 07:02 AM



“ *I would like to extend my deepest sympathy to your family.*

*I graduated from SHAPE High School in 1971 and was captain of the basketball team. I then played freshman basketball at Davidson College for Jim Larranaga - now Miami's head coach. Ever since, basketball has been an important part of my life. I have coached at least 25 youth teams. I am now the head team physician for the University of Richmond.*

*Sammie Key was my first and most important mentor in basketball. He laid the foundation for a lifelong love of the game. Not just the X's and O's, but the spirit of sharing commitment, sportsmanship and becoming a better person and friend.*

*I still remember him showing a specific move he used as a smaller player against taller players one time when we were the only 2 people in the gym. The move was much harder for me than him though. He made it look easy.*

*He will always hold a special place in my heart. If I have passed on just a little of what he gave me, my life will be well spent.*

*Our prayers are with you and your family,*

*Chris Young  
SHAPE High School '71*

Chris Young - June 28, 2015 at 08:02 AM

DH

“ Sorry to hear about Sam. When he would be passing through Kalamazoo he would call to let me know he was coming and to contact his old college basketball friends from Western Michigan University. They would open the gym especially for him and engage in legendary pick up games with former players from all over the area. He loved to talk about his ministry. You will be missed Sam.

*Duane Hobson and family*

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**Duane Hobson** - June 01, 2015 at 09:44 PM

SG

“ One of the first memories of Mr Key that I have is him taking my hand and saying welcome to Sabbath school we are glad to have you here with us young lady. He had the kindest smile and voice I had ever heard made me happy to be in church that day. He knew how to make everyone feel special. I will miss you dear friend.

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**Stacy Gruber** - May 31, 2015 at 07:57 AM

JD

“ Loved our last visit with Sam & Judy here in Florida. We hadn't seen each other in years but it felt like we had never been apart. Love you Judy & family. Joanne

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**joanne Davis** - May 30, 2015 at 03:28 PM

MC

“ Ms Joanne M. Christian purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Mr. Sammie Lee Key.



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**Ms Joanne M. Christian** - May 29, 2015 at 01:06 PM

VC

“ *Darlynda.*

*My deepest sympathy. My prayers are with you and your family*

*Vickie Conway*

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**Vickie Conway** - May 29, 2015 at 10:24 AM

JM

“ *My prayers are with Darlynda and her family.*

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**Julie MacFadden** - May 29, 2015 at 09:33 AM

TM

“ *Darlynda, David and Family. So sorry to learn of your Dad's passing and my sincere condolences to you and Family.*



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**Tina Mazon** - May 29, 2015 at 09:19 AM

L5

“ *Larry&Pam Booker And Family 1 Thess 5:18 lit a candle in memory of Mr. Sammie Lee Key*



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**Larry&Pam Booker and Family 1 Thess 5:18** - May 29, 2015 at 09:14 AM

LA

*Honoring one's parents is the will of God. You do so in all you say and do. Darlynda, we are here for you and your family. We will pray continuously for your strength and in remembrance of your dear father. Sincerely, Pam and Larry.*

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**Larry** - May 29, 2015 at 09:17 AM

GY

“ To Kim Key and family, I would to express my deepest sympathy to you and your family and I pray God brings you all some peace and know that God has his arms around your family.

*Gydawn Harvey-Tinch of Maryland*



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**GydawnHarveyTinch** - May 29, 2015 at 07:00 AM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Mr. Sammie Lee Key.



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May 29, 2015 at 05:36 AM

SF

“ Stokes Family purchased the Strength & Solace Spray for the family of Mr. Sammie Lee Key.



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**Stokes Family** - May 28, 2015 at 09:44 PM

TO

“ *What a blessing it was to walk into 1st Flint SDA Church over 35 years ago and find not only a new church family but real blood relatives. Judy, you have been a true Christian friend besides an honest, kind, loving and trustworthy standard. Then in walks a tall, handsome man of God so steadfast and upstanding an example of a Christian leader if there ever was one. You two were the epitome of "Family Values". What a positive and attractive couple you were. For myself and our entire Gibson family we salute you. Our prayers will be continually inclusive of you and your children. May the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ keep you close.*

*Sincerely,  
Terinza Gibson Osborne*

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**Terinza Osborne** - May 28, 2015 at 09:06 PM

JE

“ *We want Mr. Key's family to know we are so very sorry for your loss. Elder Key was a kind man of God. We are praying for each of you. Love and prayers, John, TyAnn and Lila Elenich*

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**John Elenich** - May 27, 2015 at 05:58 PM

BM

“ *Book Club - Columbia, Maryland purchased the Sentiments of Serenity Spray for the family of Mr. Sammie Lee Key.*



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**Book Club - Columbia, Maryland** - May 27, 2015 at 04:09 PM

TL

“ *Tia Lewis lit a candle in memory of Mr. Sammie Lee Key*



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**Tia Lewis** - May 27, 2015 at 11:59 AM

OF

“ *O'Neal Family lit a candle in memory of Mr. Sammie Lee Key*



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**O'Neal Family** - May 24, 2015 at 06:15 PM

DJ

“ *Prayers and Condolences to Mrs. Judy Key and the Key Family. Mr. Key was an awesome teacher at Neithercut Elementary School in Flint, MI where he was my daughter's teacher. R.I.H. Mr. Key*



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**Delores Johnson** - May 24, 2015 at 11:25 AM

NC

“ *To Judy I am so very sorry for your loss. I can not count the Times I prayed for Brother Sam and he recovered and walked back up in Fairhaven ,he was a trooper a fighter. Bro Sam was a great Sabbath school teacher He will be missed. I will keep you and your family in my prayers daily. I pray that the Lord will comfort and strength you and your family in the days and weeks ahead. God will see you all through this. Love (Nevelyn)*

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**Nevelyn Carroll** - May 24, 2015 at 10:50 AM

CJ

“ *Colleen Jenkins-Roberts lit a candle in memory of Mr. Sammie Lee Key*



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**Colleen Jenkins-Roberts** - May 24, 2015 at 09:54 AM