

**James J. Staggs**  
**August 18, 1926 - December 25, 2024**



James J. Staggs, known affectionately as Jim, passed away peacefully on Christmas Day, 2024, at the age of 98 in Salem, Oregon. Born on the 18th of August 1926, in Port Angeles, Washington, Jim's life was one marked by dedication, service, and a profound love for his family and faith.

Jim's early life was spent traveling with his Dad & sister via box car and Model T to live on his aunt's farm in Arkansas and his uncle's mining camp in Nevada. During World War II, at the age of 17, he enlisted in the United States Navy so he "would have a bed to sleep in." He served from 1944 to 1946, aboard the USS Oxford, APA-189, an attack troop transport in the Asiatic-Pacific Theater. After discharge from the Navy, Jim became a Christian and was baptized, beginning a lifelong journey of faith and service.

Jim graduated from Whitworth College in Spokane in 1956 with a Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education (1-8), followed by graduation from Arizona Bible Institute in 1958. His academic pursuits laid the foundation for a career in education that was as diverse as it was impactful.

Jim taught in several small elementary schools across Washington and Oregon, often wearing multiple hats as a teacher, principal, custodian, and even a basketball coach. After retiring from teaching in 1973, he worked as a custodian for the Greater Albany Public School District, retiring the second time in 1989. However, retirement did not mean the end of his work, as he continued to lend his skills as a handyman for many more years. Beyond his professional endeavors, Jim was deeply involved in his local churches, serving as pastor, adult Sunday School teacher, song leader and deacon. His commitment to his faith was unwavering, and he was often seen with memory verse cards in his shirt pocket, a practice that underscored his dedication to Scripture.

Family was the cornerstone of Jim's life. He was first married to Frances Staggs on December 2, 1949, with whom he shared 53 years until her passing in 2002. Together, they had a family that included daughters Karen Caswell (Clay) in Albany and Esther Hillary (Ted) in Lebanon, and son David Staggs (Stacy) in Sweet Home. His legacy continues through his numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren. In 2004, Jim found love again and married Antoinette Oldenburg Hillary, sharing 15 years of marriage until her passing in 2020.

Jim's hobbies were as varied as his vocations. He had a passion for leatherwork, wood-working and photography. He had his own darkroom and also collected antique cameras. He enjoyed jigsaw puzzles, and cherished family times. Throughout his life, Jim loved to travel, exploring the western United States with Frances, and later enjoying trips to the Redwoods, Victoria, and the Oregon coast with Toni.

Jim's love, humor, and faith-filled spirit have become a part of all who knew him. He will be remembered as a loving father and grandfather, his "dessert stomach," a funny storyteller, and a man of deep faith who touched the lives of many through his kindness and service.

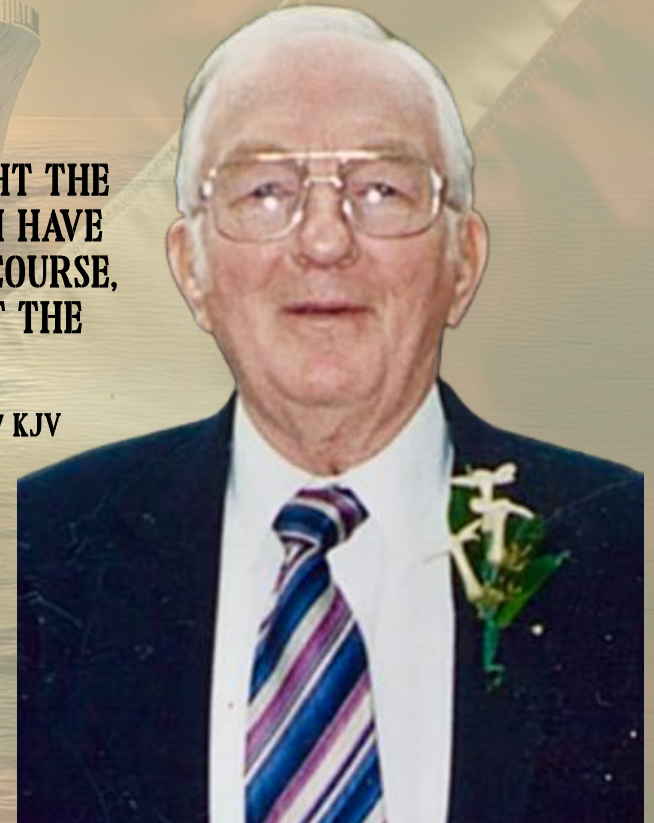
A private ceremony will be held at Willamette National Cemetery in Portland. Instead of flowers, contributions can be sent to Valley Christian Center or South Willamette Valley Honor Flight.

# HONORING THE LIFE OF JAMES J. STAGGS

**AUGUST 18, 1926 - DECEMBER 25, 2024**

**"I HAVE FOUGHT THE  
GOOD FIGHT, I HAVE  
FINISHED MY COURSE,  
I HAVE KEPT THE  
FAITH."**

**2 TIMOTHY 4:7 KJV**





## WHAT WOULD I ASK GOD

What question would I ask of God  
that I really want to know?  
Do I long to walk along by sight  
on this earthly trek below?

Or is the walk along by faith  
a better path to tread,  
Assured that He will walk along  
and lead my way instead.

The clouds that clothe the path ahead  
cover both my joy and pain;  
For joys I could not wait the day,  
and pain my life would maim.

If I could see the joys of heaven,  
how could I walk this land?  
The consuming desire to be there -  
'twould be more than I could stand.

And blinded loved ones living here  
who'll never see the Son,  
Being destined to eternal night -  
this race I could not run.

Content am I to walk by faith,  
following His guiding hand,  
Confident He knows the way ahead  
while I walk this present land.

There's nothing in this present life  
I really want to know;  
Sufficient for this pilgrimage  
is that He loves me so.

He's given me His Holy Word  
In this earthly life to see  
Until I meet the faithful One  
Who has been leading me.

-- James J. Staggs

1-21-83

## IN HONORED MEMORY OF **JAMES J. STAGGS**

**AGE: 98**

**BORN**  
August 18, 1926  
Port Angeles, Washington

**ENTERED INTO REST**  
December 25, 2024  
Salem, Oregon

**OFFICIANT**  
Claysen Caswell

**MILITARY HONORS**  
Rendered by Military Honor Guard

**WELCOME AND PRAYER**

**EULOGY**

**DISMISSAL & PRAYER**

**PRIVATE BURIAL**  
Willamette National Cemetery  
Portland, Oregon