



Minister James Akins

November 14, 1937 - January 12, 2026

“Well done, thou good and faithful servant... enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.” —
Matthew 25:21 (KJV)

Minister James Akins, age 88, a lifelong resident of Palestine and Forrest City, Arkansas, was born on November 14, 1937, in Palestine, Arkansas, to the late Willie Akins and Clara Barton Akins. He was raised in a large, faith-centered family where strong Christian values, love, and unity were instilled at an early age.

Minister Akins received his education in Palestine, Arkansas and dedicated much of his working life to honest labor and service. He worked faithfully on the farm for many years and was employed at Warwick, Halsted, and Vaccaro, before retiring from the Forrest City School District, where he served as a custodian. Known for his humility, dependability, and strong work ethic, he exemplified integrity both on and off the job. In his leisure time, he found joy in hunting, fishing, gardening, and, most of all, spending time with his family.

On Friday, November 25, 1960, Minister Akins was united in holy matrimony to the love of his life, Catherine Gunn, and together they shared many years of love, faith, and devotion.

At an early age, James accepted Christ as his Lord and Savior at Union Hill Baptist Church in Palestine, Arkansas. Later, he and his family united with Williams Temple Church of God in Christ, where he was saved, sanctified, and filled with the Holy Ghost, and where he faithfully raised his family in the fear and admonition of the Lord. Answering the call to serve, he became a Minister in the Church of God in Christ, living a life of consecration, prayer, and quiet dedication. At the time of his passing, he was a faithful member of Saints' Temple Church of God in Christ.

A man of steadfast faith, Minister James Akins walked uprightly before God, guided by prayer, discipline, and unwavering devotion to both God and family. His quiet strength, wisdom, and steady presence were a blessing to his church, his family, and all who knew him.

“I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.” — II Timothy 4:7 (KJV)

On Monday, January 12, 2026, at 11:19 a.m., Minister James Akins peacefully transitioned from this life at Forrest City Medical Center in Forrest City, Arkansas, entering into eternal rest with his Lord and Savior.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Willie Akins and Clara Barton Akins; his siblings Theresa Akins-Smith, Roosevelt Akins, John Akins, and J.V. Akins; and other loved ones who welcomed him home.

Minister Akins leaves to cherish his loving memory his devoted wife of the home, Catherine Gunn Akins of Forrest City, Arkansas; his children, Gladis (Edward) Calamese of Jonesboro, Arkansas; Dwight (Shaneika) Gunn of Las Vegas, Nevada; Jacqueline Earvin; Anthony (Bernita) Akins; Valerie Brown all of Forrest City, Arkansas; Lisa Grady of Jonesboro, Arkansas; and James Kirkland of Nebraska; twenty-two grandchildren and thirty-eight great-grandchildren; his beloved sister, Ester M. Smith of Goodwin, Arkansas; and a host of nieces, nephews, extended family members, church family, and friends who were richly blessed by his life and legacy.

“Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord... that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them.” — Revelation 14:13 (KJV)

Cemetery Details

Goodwin Memorial Cemetery

454 SFC 907 Road
Goodwin , AR 72372

Previous Events

Service

JAN 31. 1:00 PM (CT)

Salem Missionary Baptist Church
105 Haven Street
Forrest City , AR 72335

The family will line up at 350 Bertha Owens Circle, Forrest City, AR 72335 on the day of the service. Everyone is expected to be ready to leave by 12:30PM.

Tribute Wall

KM

“ Keith/Yvonne McCoy lit a candle in memory of Minister James Akins



Keith/Yvonne McCoy - January 30 at 04:33 PM

EM

“ Erika McKissick-Long sent a virtual gift in memory of Minister James Akins



Erika McKissick-Long - January 22 at 12:17 PM

EM

R.I.L. Great-Uncle!

Erika McKissick-Long - January 22 at 12:21 PM

IM

“ Irene Moore sent a virtual gift in memory of Minister James Akins



Irene moore - January 19 at 07:01 PM

MA

“ Montanna, Jamie & Blayke Akins purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Minister James Akins.



Montanna, Jamie & Blayke Akins - January 17 at 04:48 PM

MA

“ Montanna, Jamie & Blayke Akins planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Minister James Akins.

Montanna, Jamie & Blayke Akins - January 17 at 04:48 PM

DF

“ Dorothy Faulkner lit a candle in memory of Minister James Akins



Dorothy Faulkner - January 17 at 01:21 PM

LH

“ Lovie A Hardrick sent a virtual gift in memory of Minister James Akins



Lovie A Hardrick - January 17 at 10:33 AM

PH

“ Pecola Hooks lit a candle in memory of Minister James Akins



Pecola Hooks - January 16 at 07:48 PM

RW

“ My deepest sympathy, prayers and condolences the Mrs. Catherine Akins and the entire Akins family for the demise of your love one.

Rene' Ward - January 16 at 10:26 AM

AW

“ So many memories. So much wisdom. So much love. I am eternally grateful for your time here and the time recently spent around the kitchen table talking like the good old days. Never a man of many words, but even in silence I always knew I was home and I was loved.



Angel Whyte - January 15 at 06:03 PM

SG

Rest In Peace!

Steven Guyton - January 16 at 05:23 PM

ST

“ *Akins family and friends, with Sincere Heartfelt Condolences to you at this time of bereavements. Praying for comfort strength and peace today and the days ahead 🙏.*



Shirley Williams Thorn - January 15 at 02:42 PM

BJ

“ *Bobbie Jones lit a candle in memory of Minister James Akins*



Bobbie Jones - January 15 at 12:18 PM

VD

“ *Vickie Cross Dortch lit a candle in memory of Minister James Akins*



Vickie Cross Dortch - January 15 at 11:29 AM

SH

“ *This has hit me especially hard. I know my granddaddy is with the Lord, however I'll never see him on his mower or driving his truck, dressed up in a sharp suit again, him in bed super early or warming up peanuts. To everyone else he was Minister Akins, but this man was our/my grand daddy and we/I loved him immensely. I love you Granddaddy! Well done!*

Sparkle Herring - January 15 at 10:06 AM

SD

To my first cousin, Catherine Akins, please know that I share in your sorrow in the loss of James. You and the family are in my thoughts and prayers in the days ahead. May the Lord strengthen you now and forever more. Amen

SueVeria Dickens - February 01 at 11:54 AM

JW

“ Jackie White sent a virtual gift in memory of Minister James Akins



Jackie White - January 14 at 10:58 PM

BF

“ All I can remember of Minister Akins is that he was a faithful church-goer and man of God. I have basically known him all of my life in the church. I pray God's blessing and strength on the family. Thank God for this servant.



Bobbie Fingers - January 14 at 08:28 PM

CC

“ Charlotte Coleman lit a candle in memory of Minister James Akins



Charlotte Coleman - January 14 at 05:03 PM

SH

“ Family an close friends we send our condolences an Prayers to you. May you continue to be Blessed in Christ. 🙏



Shirley Haggins - January 14 at 04:32 PM

TV

“ Tamara Varnado lit a candle in memory of Minister James Akins



Tamara Varnado - January 14 at 03:25 PM

DJ

“ Dorothy Johnson lit a candle in memory of Minister James Akins



Dorothy johnson - January 14 at 03:19 PM