



## Dr. William Jackson "Jack" Fritts

April 15, 1940 - March 26, 2020

Dr. William Jackson "Jack" Fritts was born April 15, 1940 in Knoxville, Tennessee to Ernest and Evelyn Fritts. He died peacefully March 26, 2020 after a long nine-year battle with Parkinson's disease.

Dr. Fritts surrendered to the ministry while in college. Upon completion of his Junior year he went to East St. Louis, Illinois as a Summer Missionary with the Southern Baptist Convention. He worked in Vacation Bible Schools and preached when he had the opportunity. He stayed in the area when he felt God calling him to pastor a small mission church. This is where he met his wife of 58 years, Erma Faye Troyer Fritts. Later he and Faye were appointed by the Home Mission Board of the Convention to serve as Missionaries to Northern Illinois to start new churches and mentor pastors of existing churches. However, his heart was to pastor and preach in a local church. During his ministry he led his churches to start three Spanish speaking churches.

In order to be as prepared as possible to preach the Gospel, he finished his college degree in Kentucky where he pastored a small church. Knowing a theological education was top priority he planned to attend The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kentucky, but God had other plans. As graduation drew near, he felt God leading him to Ft. Worth, Texas and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He earned his Bachelor of Divinity and later both his Masters and Doctorate of Theology. He was also given the opportunity to do post graduate work at Queens College in Oxford, England.

His ministry has included churches in Illinois, Kentucky and Texas. In East Texas he pastored both First Baptist, Marshall and Oakland Heights Baptist in Longview. Doctor Fritts retired from the pastorate after serving Southern Baptist churches for 56 years. Following his retirement, he continued preaching as an interim pastor and did pulpit supply for several churches until his health began to fail.

Dr. Fritts served as a Trustee on the Boards of both East Texas Baptist University and The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. His other denominational service included work on various associational, state, convention committees, and boards. Dr. Fritts was preceded in death by his parents, Ernest and Evelyn Fritts. He is survived by his wife, Erma Faye Fritts, one son Douglas Jackson Fritts and daughter Jennifer Anne Fritts-Johnson. Also, three grandsons, Matthew Jackson Fritts, LCpl Caleb Michael Fritts,

USMC, and Payton Alexander Johnson.

The family extends a Special Thank You to the staff of Longview Hill Nursing Home for the excellent care they provided Dr. Fritts during this last year.

Suggested family donations may be made in Dr. Fritts memory to the Parkinson's Foundation, 200 SE 1st ST. Suite 800, Miami, Florida, The Oakland Heights Baptist Building Fund or charity of choice.

Due to the current national health crisis, the family is having private graveside services at Rosewood Park.

# Cemetery

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## **Rosewood Park**

1884 FM 1844

Longview, TX, 75605

# Comments

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“ We were fortunate to have him as Pastor and friend. He was so easy going and spiritual minded. Loved he and Faye. Sympathy to the family. Marilyn Newell-Wikgren and family.

**Marilyn Newell Wikgren** - May 29, 2020 at 01:35 PM

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“ On behalf of the Melvin and Ruth Nance family our condolences to you and your family. A truly great pastor and friend to our family. Mark Dyer

**Mark Dyer** - April 02, 2020 at 04:07 PM

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“ Dr. Jack, my “fragile flower”. I had the honor and privilege of training Dr. Jack for about 3 years. He was a saint. I loved that man like he was my father, full of wisdom and grace. I learned so much from him, he is one of the most precious individuals I ever encountered. My heart is better because of him.

**laura coles** - March 30, 2020 at 04:43 PM

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“ Jack was Matthew and Caleb Fritts’s beloved Papa. He always expressed so much love, patience and kindness and the boys cherished him deeply. He was a wonderful role model and mentor. He will be missed

**Terri Fritts** - March 30, 2020 at 03:24 PM

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“ Dr. William Jackson Fritts, ThD, will always be one of the top of God's Warriors in our lives, and in the lives of many, many others. Known to many of his church members simply as "Brother Jack", as he would always preferred to be called, he was the first pastor we were privileged to have when we came to this area of East Texas in 1985 when as Christian believers, Brenda and I along with our very young sons, joined Oakland Heights Baptist Church where Brother Jack was the senior pastor.

Under Brother Jack's tenure as our senior pastor at Oakland Heights Baptist Church, I was privileged to have served as his Director of Texas Baptist Men and one of his deacons when we had our monthly prayer breakfasts in the "Family Life Center" and in our service projects to the community. It was also under his leadership that he had me begin serving as Coordinator of Church Safety and Security due to my regular occupation with Public Safety and teaching in that same field of service.

I was truly blessed to witness how Brother Jack touched many lives and led many to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Among those were our two sons, Jack Lanier, III and his brother Brent Andrew Lanier, both whom he also baptized as pre-teenagers.

Brother Jack was my, and my family's pastor, a faithful mentor, and a dear friend, his memory will always be in our hearts, and we will will rejoice in having fellowship with him again in the direct presence of our Lord Jesus Christ.

To Faye and their children whom we also are blessed to know, we are praying for you today and for the days, weeks, and months ahead. May the Lord richly bless, provide for, and comfort you.

In His Name,

Jack H. Lanier, Jr. and Family

Jack H. Lanier, Jr. - March 29, 2020 at 02:32 PM

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“ Bro Jack was pastor of FBC Marshall when we first came to Marshall on furlough from our work at the Arab Baptist seminary in Beirut, Lebanon. We joined FBC Marshall and have served there for several years in various ways. Bro. Jack was an inspiration to us as we returned to Beirut. We have considered him as a dear friend over all these years.

David and Maxine King

David W King - March 29, 2020 at 10:07 AM

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“ So much love for Brother Jack and his precious wife Faye. Tina and David Green, Oakland Heights, Longview, TX

**Katina Green** - March 29, 2020 at 02:06 AM

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“ Patsy Hickerson lit a candle in memory of Dr. William Jackson "Jack" Fritts



**Patsy Hickerson** - March 28, 2020 at 10:37 PM

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“ Our family loved Faye and Jack so much. They have been a part of our lives for years.  
He and dad were very close, and we still see Faye in Longview. As with many others Bro. Jack, Dr. Fritts, married my husband, Gary and I, as well as my brother, David, and his wife, Mary Lou. Many good times and memories.

**Debbie Fletcher Hall** - March 28, 2020 at 07:09 PM

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“ Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Dr. William Jackson "Jack" Fritts.



March 28, 2020 at 04:10 PM

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“ Jack was a special friend and pastor to our family. We all loved him very much.

**Joy Reeves** - March 28, 2020 at 10:53 AM



“ I dearly appreciate Brother Jack’s ministry and the constant trust that he showed in me, even in some of the most troubled moments of my life. He will be missed.

- Brent Kohlenberger

**Brent Kohlenberger** - March 27, 2020 at 10:03 PM



“ This man had the largest impact and most influence in me coming to know Christ’s love and saving grace. Then he took it a step forward and started me on my theological journey by supplying me a a copy of JP Boyces Abstract of Systematic Theology. Forever grateful!

John Lowery

**John Lowery** - March 27, 2020 at 11:19 PM



“ Bro. Jack was a Christian gentleman. Faye, Kenneth loved him dearly. Thank you for your friendship.

In Him,

Carole Mills

**Carole Mills** - March 30, 2020 at 02:25 PM