



## John David Gillespie

November 7, 1924 - May 19, 2018

John David Gillespie, age 93, widower of Madaline Sutherland Gillespie, was called home to the Lord on May 19, 2018. He died peacefully at Greenville Memorial Hospital surrounded by his loving family. Mr. Gillespie was born on November 7th, 1924 in Greenville, SC, a son of the late John Gregg Gillespie and Cornelia Patton Gillespie, and Gertrude Miller Gillespie.

He was a devoted husband, son, brother, father, grandfather and friend who enjoyed gospel music, golf, humor and traveling. He was a veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps having served in World War II and the Korean War where he was the crew chief of then Lt. John Glenn.

Mr. Gillespie was a proud graduate of Furman University earning a B.A. in History and a M.A. in Education. Education was a driving force in his life as he was a retired teacher of thirty years at Parker High School, where he taught Government and Economics. He was also the golf coach and was elected Senior Class Advisor for over twenty years. His passion was found in serving as a church music leader, alongside of his late wife, in multiple Baptist churches including Slater, New Pisgah, Abner Creek, Grace, Pleasant Grove, Northwood, Friendship and Judson.

Surviving are his loving family, his son and daughter-in-law, Steven and Louise Gillespie of Greer; and this three grandchildren, Matthew (Mandy), David and Katie Gillespie.

He is preceded in death by his beloved wife of 62 years, Rosa Madaline Sutherland Gillespie as well as siblings, Kathleen Lewis, Ruby Stewart,

Georgeann Gillespie, Daniel Gillespie, Kenneth Gillespie, Merion Gillespie, Niegel Gillespie and great-great aunt by marriage, Lucinda Hiott.

Funeral services will be held at 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 24, 2018 at Greer First Baptist Church, conducted by Dr. Doug Mize and Dr. Mike Runion. Burial will follow in Mountain View Cemetery in Greer, SC with military honors.

Pallbearers will be Matthew Gillespie, David Gillespie, Parker Spears, Doug Dobbins, Jim Spears and Tom Harper.

Visitation will be held 5:30 p.m. until 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 23, 2018 at The Wood Mortuary.

The family is at the home.

Memorials may be made Disabled American Veterans at Disabled American Veterans, Post Office Box 1431, Cincinnati, OH 45250 or DAV.org

Online condolences may be made at [www.woodmortuary.com](http://www.woodmortuary.com)

# Cemetery Details

## Mountain View Cemetery

303 North Avenue  
Greer, SC 29650

# Previous Events

## Visitation

**MAY 23.** 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM (ET)

The Wood Mortuary, Inc.  
300 West Poinsett Street  
Greer, SC 29650  
(864) 877-3351  
woodmortuary@bellsouth.net

## Service

**MAY 24.** 4:00 PM (ET)

Greer First Baptist Church  
201 West Poinsett Street  
Greer, SC 29650

# Tribute Wall

SC

“ He was my 7th grade teacher at Parker High. He was always smiling and ready with a funny remark. Steve, I know you and your family miss him.  
Sybil Barnes Collins

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**Sybil Barnes Collins** - August 14, 2018 at 08:32 PM

CW

“ Very sorry to hear about the passing of your Dad. My mind goes back to the times when your Dad and my Dad were together and the stories and jokes would start and both would laugh and keep laughing until someone closed the Church Doors . You and Louise will be in my Prayers , along with the rest of the family. We have a lot of good memories. Love you both Michael Waters

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**C. Michael Waters** - May 24, 2018 at 11:54 AM

MW

“ Dear Steve and family, My memories of your dad begin when I was very young, and riding on the back of his motorcycle all around your, what seemed to me, great big yard. My older brother and sister (John and Laurinda) knew you and your folks so much more deeply than I, but my memories are always of lots of laughter, and especially of your Dad's special laugh. Those memories are precious. However, I appreciate so very much how your Dad made the special effort to come to Florida on several occasions. He traveled to celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary, and then again to Mom's 70th birthday party. I will always remember the delight and smile on her face when she realized who had just walked in the door, all the way from South Carolina! For that, and so much more I am grateful for the gift John Gillespie (my family always called him by both names.) was for our family, especially in the very long friendship that our parents shared. And now, I just have to wonder what is going on in heaven, with the two Johns back together. Blessings to you and your family. Mary Wright (John and Dot's younger daughter.)

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**Mary E. Wright** - May 23, 2018 at 07:27 PM

JH

“ Dear Steve and Family:

*We were sad to learn about the death of your father. Please know that you are in our prayers.*

*John and Bea Heberger*

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**John and Bea Heberger** - May 23, 2018 at 12:58 PM

SW

“ *Craig Sandra Keishia and Chris Wilson Your family are in our thoughts and prayers!*



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**Sandra Wilson** - May 22, 2018 at 10:40 PM

TF

“ *The Payne, Rogers and Whitmire Families purchased the Dreams From the Heart Bouquet for the family of John David Gillespie.*



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**The Payne, Rogers and Whitmire Families** - May 22, 2018 at 06:15 PM

TP

“ All nephews and nieces have a favorite aunt and uncle. Uncle John and Aunt Dean were my favorites. He treated you as an adult when you were a child. Make you laugh the minute you saw him, make you think when appropriate, a real life, real deal, role model. He also had a knack for finding out secrets. My sister and i broke my parents bed, by jumping on it one day, when we were in elementary school. Somehow, we managed to fix it and it stayed fixed until...Uncle John and Aunt Dean came to my high school graduation. A long day, exhausting drive, ready for bed after dinner. The “broken” bed. As they sought to slumber, the broken slats finally gave way, sending them to the floor with a very loud crash. My parents were upset, Uncle John couldn’t quit laughing. That’s the man he was. I know the loss hurts for all who knew and loved him but i also know we are better folks because he was in our lives. Uncle John will always live in my thoughts and heart.

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Tommy Joe Payne - May 22, 2018 at 05:37 PM

MF

“ Mr. Gillespie was my teacher at Parker High School, but more importantly, he was always my friend. He had such great character. He was a kind, honest, Christian, well-groomed southern gentleman. Other than my own father, Mr. Gillespie was my role model for what a man should be. My prayers go out to his family.

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Mike Finley - May 21, 2018 at 11:23 PM

RK

“ My introduction to music came from my church family when John and Madeline Gillespie were at Northwood Baptist in Greer. I was active in the choirs from the time I was probably 6 years old, and Mrs. Gillespie taught me to play the organ. Later, the influence of the Gillespie family on my journey as a musician became even stronger when John and Madeline's son Steven was my high school band director.

Both Mr. Gillespie's were big jokesters, and my fondest memory of Mr. John Gillespie comes from a choir festival. Several Baptist choirs met on a Sunday afternoon to sing for each other and to get ratings and comments from a couple of other choir directors. As we sat in the congregation, each choir director introduced his accompanist by name. I had the good fortune of being Mrs. Gillespie's page turner that day. When Northwood's turn to sing came, Mr. Gillespie faced the congregation with a straight face and said, "Our accompanist is the lady at the piano." He turned to the choir without another word and gave the downbeat for them to start singing. Mrs. Gillespie never cracked a smile or missed a beat, and off we went.

I haven't seen Mr. Gillespie in years, but his influence and that of his family on my life and my career sit beside on the piano or organ bench every time I play and every time I run a choir rehearsal. God Bless you, John Gillespie. I'll know you'll be missed by your family and countless former students and choir members.

Rick Knight  
Columbia, SC

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Rick Knight - May 21, 2018 at 06:11 PM

BB

“ just wanted the family to how much I thought of your dad & the family , hope you know ya ll are in my prayers & thoughts . just a thought / though often I feel discouraged , I know that God is there, for even when I whisper , He here s my faintest prayer. Barry Bishop

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**barry bishop** - May 21, 2018 at 05:20 PM

BR

“ Steven and family,  
Sorry for your loss. I know he will be greatly missed. Uncle John was a very dear man and loved to tell his little jokes and humorous stories! Your family is in my prayers and I know there is a great reunion taking place in heaven as a new angel has been added to the choir.  
Love and prayers,  
Becky Royal

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**Becky Royal** - May 21, 2018 at 04:47 PM

ED

“ Ed Darnell lit a candle in memory of John David Gillespie



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**Ed Darnell** - May 21, 2018 at 04:46 PM

SH

“ I loved this man so much he was my 7th grade teacher at PHS and i have stayed in touch with him for all these years. Will miss his smile and funny stories. Heaven is a happier place now that he is home. STEVEN YOU AND YOUR FAMILY ARE IN MY PRAYERS. SAUNDRA HUNTER.



Saundra hunter - May 21, 2018 at 03:29 PM

SW

“ Your family are in our thoughts and prayers today and in the days ahead  
Craig Sandra Keishia and Chris Wilson



Sandra Wilson - May 21, 2018 at 01:46 PM



“ With Distinction was purchased for the family of John David Gillespie.



May 21, 2018 at 01:23 PM



“ Beautiful Dreams was purchased for the family of John David Gillespie.



May 21, 2018 at 10:49 AM

AR

“ I (Anna Marie Rogers) don't know why, but for some reason, as a child, I referred to him as “Uncle John Daddy.” He always laughed about that every time he reminded me of it. Uncle John was a master storyteller and he would weave my name for him into the tales he told. I'm proud to have been a contributor. There is likely not a person who has known Uncle John who lacked for a good story to tell about him!

Uncle John and Aunt Dean kindly included our Aunt Lou in their household for many years. I remember their house as huge and rambling and that it was out in the country (not so any longer!). I spent a few nights with them once upon a time and Aunt Lou and I were bed-buddies. The room had pink wallpaper with little ballerinas on it. I thought it was magical and I felt very loved.

The only time that I have ever fired a shot gun was with Uncle John in what used to be a field beside their house. I must not have been very accurate, since I do not recall being invited to go hunting.

Thank you to Steven, Louise and your family for the love, kindness and care of Uncle John for many, many years.

Peace and love from our families,

Tommy Joe and Dayna Payne and family  
Laurie Ann (Payne) and David Whitmire and family  
Anna Marie (Payne) and Steve Rogers and family

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**Anna Marie Rogers** - May 21, 2018 at 09:28 AM

 Alec  
Odom

“ Sorry for y'all's loss. In my prayers.

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**Alec Odom** - May 21, 2018 at 07:22 AM

GB

“ Gary N Mary Bennefield lit a candle in memory of John David Gillespie



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**Gary n Mary Bennefield** - May 21, 2018 at 07:16 AM

KR

“ One of the classes I had while pursuing my PHD. He was funny, smart and always smiling. Rest in peace Mr. Gillespie and Godspeed. A race well run and a reward well earned. Condolences to my fellow classmate Stephen.

Thank you  
Ken Raines  
Class of 64

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**ken raines** - May 21, 2018 at 06:33 AM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of John David Gillespie.



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May 20, 2018 at 10:07 PM

Mary  
Patterson

“ *Mary Patterson lit a candle in memory of John David Gillespie*



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**Mary Patterson** - May 20, 2018 at 08:55 PM

BO

“ *Mr. Gillespie was not only an educator, he was a teacher. His students were blessed to receive academic and life lessons. He related on a personal level and passed on “words of wisdom” you could use in real life. One of my favorites was “dry off before you exit the tub or shower; there is no need to soak the bath mat”. Now that was an education you could apply daily and I have 😊 My sympathy to the family. All the lives that John Gillespie touched, were better because he was in them. He was a wise, caring, sharing man.*

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**Barbara Miller Ostendorff** - May 20, 2018 at 08:50 PM