

*James Leland Perkins*, 81, and a longtime Crookston, MN resident, passed away at Benedictine Living Community Crookston early Saturday morning, December 23, 2023, with loving family at his side.

Jim, as he was best known throughout his life, was born on April 29, 1942, in St. Paul, MN to biological parents, John and Ruth (Johnson) Lopez. At the age of 5½ he was adopted by Leland and Betty (Tosseth) Perkins and raised in a loving, Christian home. The newly formed Perkins family lived at different times in St. Paul, Fergus Falls, and Morris, all in MN, and Devils Lake, ND, due to Leland's employment with the Otter Tail Power Company. It was at Devils Lake where Jim completed his high school education, graduating with the Class of 1960. After working in the Devils Lake area Jim attended Jamestown (ND) State College for a year and eventually enrolled at Bemidji (MN) State College, where in 1970 he earned a Bachelor's degree while majoring in English and Theater. On March 27, 1971, in the First Presbyterian Church in Bemidji, Jim was united in marriage to Sandra Lee Gould. In the years that would follow, their union would be blessed by the births of sons, Matthew and Eric. Jim and Sandy first lived in Granite Falls, MN where he taught until 1977. Jim had lived his whole life to this point as a man of great faith which resulted in his acceptance of a position as 2-year interim pastor for the Cass Lake, MN Methodist Church. In 1979 Jim, Sandy, and the boys moved to Crookston where he taught English and Drama at Crookston Central High School for 2 years and Mount St. Benedict High for another year. Jim then began managing the Climax Credit Union Office and later the Northwest Collection Agency. His last years before retirement were perhaps his most fulfilling as he served the Presbyterian Church USA as a licensed Lay Pastor serving many rural Churches throughout Eastern ND and Northwest MN as their interim pastor. His devotion to these Congregations resulted in many deep and abiding friendships that have lasted to the present time. In 1997 Jim found his birth father, John Lopez, a few months before John's death and they had a good reunion. His birth mother, Ruth, had passed away previously.

Crookston always remained home to Sandy and Jim and where they were devoted members of the First Presbyterian Church. Jim enjoyed serving as director for many Crookston Community Theater productions and also became a volunteer driver for Tri-Valley Transportation for several years.

Student, educator, member of the business world, and community leader were positions that Jim enjoyed throughout his life. But they were all secondary to his roles as a servant of his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; his 52-years of marriage to Sandy, the love of his life; their 2 wonderful sons, Matthew and Eric who brought them so much joy; and 3 terrific grandsons, Oliver, Logan, and Braeden, who made them feel young again. Not only did Jim care deeply for his family and friends, he genuinely cared for his students and his clients. In life Jim commonly ended his classes, services and encounters with friends with the phrase, "I leave you simply with Love and Peace."

Jim will spend his first Christmas in heaven and takes leave of his family knowing they will all be reunited again someday. For now he will be lovingly remembered and sadly missed by his beloved, Sandy; their 2 sons, Matthew and Eric, both of Champlin, MN; 3 grandsons: Oliver of Minneapolis, and Logan and Braeden, both of Champlin; biological siblings, Mildred Lopez and Russell Lopez, both of St. Paul; brother-in-law, Richard Gould of Columbia Falls, MT; nieces, Lennea Lopez Guertin and husband, Glenn, of St. Paul and Mechele (Ryan) Hilton of Mount Pleasant, SC; extended family; and a host of friends.

Jim is preceded in death by his parents, Leland and Betty Perkins; biological parents, John and Ruth Lopez; and biological brother, John Lopez Jr.

*Blessed be the memory of James Leland Perkins.*



*In Loving Memory*

IN LOVING MEMORY

*James Leland Perkins*

April 29, 1942 ~ December 23, 2023

*The Memorial Service Honoring Jim's Life*

Wednesday, January 3, 2024 at 2:00 p.m.  
First Presbyterian Church - Crookston, Minnesota  
The Rev. Michael Ozaki - The Rev. Ruth Sanders, officiating

*Obituary*

Read by Oliver Perkins

*Scripture Readings*

Rev. Michael Ozaki – Sandra Perkins

*Prayer for Illumination and Sermon*

The Rev. Ruth Sanders

*Family Sharing*

Eric and Braeden Perkins

*Special Music*

"Amazing Grace/My Chains Are Gone"

Brent Thorson, solo with guitar

"Hallelujah"

Braeden Perkins

*Congregational Hymns*

"How Great Thou Art"

"I Danced in the Morning"

George French, organist/pianist

*Honorary Urn Bearers*

Jim's Grandsons

Oliver – Logan – Braeden

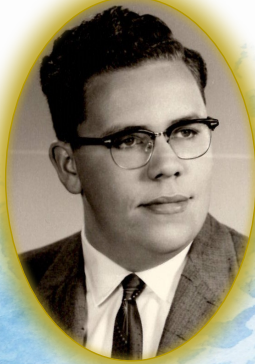
*Interment*

First Presbyterian Church Columbarium

*We would like to thank everyone for your very kind expressions of sympathy and the comfort it has given us. Your presence, whether in person or in spirit has meant so much as we celebrate the life of our Beloved Husband and Best Friend, Dad, Grandpa, Brother, and Uncle.*

Love,

Sandy – Matt – Eric – Oliver – Logan – Braeden  
and Family



*In spring, tree's leaves were merely buds  
when everything was new.*

*They couldn't shade, not hide a bird,  
but every day they grew.*

*Now autumn's here, and leaves have turned  
from summertime's full bloom.*

*They separate from branch, their home,  
and snow will be their tomb.*

*How sad that when they're at their peak it's time for them to go.*

*Yet, how colorful they made this world; it was God's plan, I know.*

*Your life, too, was most beautiful; how brightly shown your heart.*

*For now dear love, you've joined the leaves, and from us, did depart.*

*Separated from us on earth you've joined the Lord above.*

*We'll miss you here, our dearest one, but glad you taught us love.*

