



Dr. Joe Richard Wren

April 12, 1944 - February 25, 2026

Dr. Joe Richard Wren, of Summerville, S.C. entered eternal rest on Wednesday, February 25, 2026. Born April 12, 1944, in Gaffney, SC, Joe is survived by his son Joseph Wren (Teresa) of Mt. Pleasant, SC; daughter Clary Wren Vance (Todd) of Jupiter, Florida; grandchildren Chloe Elizabeth Wren, Cille Patterson Wren, John Joseph (J.J.) Vance, Lilly-Kaye Vance, Wren Margaret Vance, and Georgia Mae Vance; and brothers Jim Wren (Peggy) of Charlotte, NC and Jack Wren (Sheila) of Rock Hill, SC. He is predeceased by his wife Kaye Patterson Wren, daughter Mary Elizabeth “Beth” Wren, brother Rev. John Wren, and parents, Rev. Everette and Blanche Petty Wren of Gaffney, SC.

While attending Gaffney High School, Joe was a star athlete who competed in baseball, track and football. He won multiple state championships and was inducted into the Gaffney Hall of Fame. Joe continued his football career at Newberry College before yielding to the call of ministry. This decision led him to serve as pastor at Pine Grove Baptist Church in Clover, SC; Union View Baptist Church in Franklin, NC; and Belmont Baptist Church in Columbia, SC. During this time, Joe married his high school sweetheart, started a family, finished his college degree from Winthrop College, and completed his Master of Divinity from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, NC.

In 1977, Joe accepted the pastorate position at Broadway Baptist Church in Maryville, TN. The church enthusiastically encouraged Joe's academic pursuits, and he traveled to complete his Doctor of Ministry from Southern Baptist in Louisville, KY.

Five years later in 1982, First Baptist Church of Sevierville, TN, requested Joe to serve as their lead pastor. He accepted the call, and he and his family felt they had found their "home" in East Tennessee. Joe had no intention of ever leaving Sevierville, but he once again obeyed the Providential call and accepted the position at Summerville Baptist Church in 1990.

From 1990 to 2012, Joe served as the lead pastor at Summerville Baptist Church. He was respected for preaching from the heart, shepherding from the center of the flock, leading with kindness, and caring for people. His conviction, compassion, and courage are hallmarks of his ministry.

In addition, Joe served on numerous committees throughout his life, including Screven Baptist Association, Southern Baptist Convention, Summerville Ministerial Association (President), Board of Directors for United Way, Board of Trustees for Tennessee Adult Homes, and Chairman of the Board of Trustees for Charleston Southern University to name a few. He and Kaye were both very involved with CSU and fully supported its mission.

Joe loved Jesus, his church, his family, and the Tennessee Vols. If one were to ask his greatest life accomplishment, he would not hesitate to answer, "leading others to Christ." He urged Christians to be authentic in their faith, to lead with kindness, and to love and serve others.

The family will receive friends on Sunday, March 29 from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m. and a celebration of life service will follow at 3:00 p.m. at Summerville Baptist Church. Prior to the celebration, a graveside service will take place at 11:00

a.m. on Saturday, March 28th at Midway Baptist Church in Gaffney, SC.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Joe and Kaye Wren Endowed Scholarship Fund at Charleston Southern University or to Summerville Baptist Church.

Charleston Southern University
Office of Development
9200 University Blvd
Charleston, SC 29423

Summerville Baptist Church
417 Central Ave
Summerville, SC 29483

Previous Events

Graveside Service

MAR 28. 11:00 AM (ET)

Midway Baptist Church
153 Midway Road
Gaffney , SC 29341

Gathering of Family and Friends

MAR 29. 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM (ET)

Summerville Baptist Church
417 Central Avenue
Summerville, SC 29483

Celebration of Life Service

MAR 29. 3:00 PM (ET)

Summerville Baptist Church
417 Central Avenue
Summerville, SC 29483

Tribute Wall



“ Hugs and Love, Christine and Tommy Hoban purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Dr. Joe Richard Wren.



Hugs and Love, Christine and Tommy Hoban - March 26 at 10:52 AM



“ Hugs and Love, Christine and Tommy Hoban planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Dr. Joe Richard Wren.

Hugs and Love, Christine and Tommy Hoban - March 26 at 10:52 AM



“ 3 files added to the album Life Tributes



James A Dyal Funeral Home - March 24 at 12:09 PM



“ 14 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



James A Dyal Funeral Home - March 24 at 08:44 AM



“ 39 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



James A Dyal Funeral Home - March 23 at 01:42 PM



“ 48 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



James A Dyal Funeral Home - March 23 at 10:55 AM