



James (Jim) Lee Zes

August 28, 1952 - April 13, 2026

James Lee "Jim" Zes Obituary

Share

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved His appearing. 2 Timothy 4:7-8

James Jim Lee Zes, 73, died on April 13, 2026 at peace in Jesus and surrounded by his family, after a battle with cancer, which he endured with courage and grace.

Born and raised in St. Louis, Missouri, Jim lived a life marked by steadfast devotion, quiet strength, abundant generosity, and a playful nature. He was, in every sense, the best of men- the heartbeat of his family and a constant and steady source of wisdom, stability, and care for all who knew him.

Jim was the beloved husband of Kathleen Kathy Zes (nee Koehnemann), with whom he shared a partnership of love and devotion that came to an end just one month shy of fifty years of marriage. Jim treasured his wife as his dearest friend, and their life together was full of affection, laughter, and a shared mission. As a couple unified by their love for Jesus and a passion for building

the kingdom of God, they cultivated a lasting legacy of generosity. Through the decades, their great joy was to strategize on ways to practically and spiritually invest in others - one life, one family, and one ministry at a time.

An affectionate, kind, and fun father, Jim was the best girl dad and was deeply adored by his three daughters, Sarah, Rebekah, and Hannah (Wong). The greatest gift he gave them was leading them to know and love Jesus. He was greatly loved by his son (in-law), Andrew Wong, and one of Jim's greatest joys was being Pops and best friend to his grandsons, Edmund and Henry Wong, with whom he would often be found playing or wrestling.

A man of abiding faith, Jim was a servant for Jesus Christ. He served as a spiritual father and mentor to many - offering guidance not only in matters of faith, but also business, real estate, and finance. He was affectionately known by many as JB or Papa Zes. He had genuine care for others, no matter who they were, always asking questions and engaging in conversation, wherever he was. Jim loved to share his knowledge, always freely passing on to others what he had learned or been given. He loved teaching classes on history, theology, business, investing, and personal finances. His bountiful generosity is evident in the countless lives he influenced and encouraged all over the country. Jim's heart for hospitality made his home a welcome place for many over the years.

From the age of eight he knew what occupation he wanted to pursue. Motivated by a love for work and apartments instilled in him by his father, Jim and his brother, Greg, built a successful company, DeVault. He labored for over fifty years doing what he loved, and preferred to spend his days being active on the jobsite. He worked alongside his employees and took an active interest in their personal well-being.

Athletic and competitive, Jim played a number of sports over the years

including soccer, bowling, tennis, and softball. He was youthful in body and mind, playful and joking, often with a glimmer in his eye, a grin on his face, and a cap on his head.

Since being redeemed by Christ in his late thirties, Jim was a dedicated churchman; he later had the privilege of serving as a church elder for fifteen years. His love for Gods kingdom also motivated him for many years to serve on the board for a number of ministries. He was a humble proclaimer of truth and a bold defender of the unborn.

An avid reader and collector of antiquarian books, Jim always had a stack of books he was working through- he even formed a publishing company with a dear friend to edit and publish books. First and foremost, he loved to spend time in the Word of God and committing it to memory. The 23rd Psalm was especially meaningful to him in his final days.

Jim will be remembered for his unwavering love for his family, his deep and active faith in Jesus and His Word, and the quiet authority with which he lived his life. Even in his final hours there was more work he wanted to accomplish, more people he wanted to bless, and more ways he wanted to serve God on earth. His legacy endures in the lives he shaped, the hearts he inspired, the friends he encouraged, the work and businesses he invested in, the family he led, and the faith that he boldly proclaimed - not just with his words but also purposefully with the way that he lived.

SOLI DEO GLORIA

Jim is survived by his younger siblings, Greg (Kris) Zes, Karen (Joe) Gentelin, and Cathy (Jim) Kirchner; his brothers-in-law, Ed (Angie) Koehnemann, John (Bev) Koehnemann, Bill Koehnemann, and Joe (Lori) Koehnemann; and

eighteen nieces and nephews (and their spouses, as well as a number of great nieces and nephews). He was preceded in death by his parents, Peter Zes and Joan Zes (nee Kroner).

The memorial service will be held on Friday evening, May 15, 2026, and the burial on Saturday morning, May 16, 2026. All are welcome to attend.

Memorial Service: Friday, May 15, 2026

5:00pm - Visitation

6:30pm - Service

Location:

Twin Oaks Presbyterian Church

1230 Big Bend Road

Ballwin, MO 63021

Burial: Saturday, May 16, 2026

10:15am - Arrive at gravesite

10:30am - Interment

Location:

Bellerive Gardens Cemetery

(North entrance)

740 N. Mason Road

St. Louis, MO 63141

Following interment on Saturday, May 16, please join the family for refreshments, fellowship, and to share memories and tributes.

11:30am - 2:30pm

Location:

The Commons

14885 Clayton Road

Chesterfield, MO 63017

If you'd like to send a message to the family or want to share a memory of Jim, please add it to this page or record and send a video message for his memorial video here: <https://share.vidday.com/e/m-gudv7p> (Please copy and paste this link into your browser address bar.)

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to continue the work that was close to Jim's heart: (Please copy and paste the link into your browser address bar if you are unable to click directly on the link to the website.)

Heartcry Missionary Society <https://give.heartcrymissionary.com/>

Persecution Project Foundation <https://persecutionproject.org/>

Mission Gate Prison Ministry <https://missiongateministry.org/ways-to-donate>

Reach Reproductive Health <https://reachreproductivehealth.com/501c3/>

Answers in Genesis <https://answersingenesis.org/donate/>

Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary <https://www.gpts.edu/give>

Banner of Truth Trust <https://banneroftruth.org/us/about/support-banner/>

Chapel Library <https://www.chapellibrary.org/donate>

Ligonier Ministries <https://www.ligonier.org/give>

Plymouth Rock Foundation <https://plymrock.org/prf/>

Compassion International <https://www.compassion.com/give/>

Institute for Creation Research <https://www.icr.org/donate/index/>

Cemetery Details

Bellerive Gardens Cemetery

740 North Mason Road
St. Louis, MO 63141
(314) 434-3933
info@bellerivegardens.com
<https://bellerivegardens.com>

Previous Events

Memorial Visitation

MAY 15. 5:00 PM - 6:30 PM (CT)

Twin Oaks Presbyterian Church
1230 Big Bend Road
Ballwin, MO

Memorial Service

MAY 15. 6:30 PM (CT)

Twin Oaks Presbyterian Church
1230 Big Bend Road
Ballwin, MO

Graveside Service

MAY 16. 10:30 AM (CT)

Bellerive Gardens Cemetery
740 North Mason Road
St. Louis, MO 63141
(314) 434-3933
info@bellerivegardens.com
<https://bellerivegardens.com>