



Wallace "Wally" Preston Odum, Jr.

September 11, 1946 - December 6, 2025

Wallace Preston "Wally" Odum, Jr., 79, of Warrenton, Virginia, passed away peacefully on December 6, 2025, surrounded by his loving family. A devoted husband, father, brother, pastor, and friend, Wally lived a life defined by deep faith, unwavering passion for the Bible, and a genuine love for people.

Born on September 11, 1946, in Abingdon, Virginia, Wally was the son of Wallace P. Odum, Sr., and Eula Marie Sumpter Odum. He grew up in a close-knit family that instilled in him enduring values of kindness, service, and integrity. He graduated from Lee High School in Springfield, Virginia, in 1964 and subsequently attended the University of Virginia, where he completed three years of engineering studies.

During his third year at UVA, Wally experienced a profound call to ministry that changed the direction of his life. In obedience to that call, he left engineering studies and enrolled at Northeast Bible College (now the University of Valley Forge), where he earned his degree in ministry. He later continued his theological education at Eastern Mennonite Seminary in Harrisonburg, Virginia.

Wally began his pastoral journey in Strasburg, Virginia, where he discovered his passion for preaching, shepherding, and encouraging others. Over the next five decades, he faithfully served in ministry across multiple states and

overseas. His pastoral and teaching roles included:

- Pastor, Westminster Assembly of God, Westminster, Maryland (1974–1978)
- Pastor, First Assembly of God, later Church of the Redeemer (now Wave Church), Virginia Beach, Virginia (1978–1999)
- Teaching Pastor and itinerant ministry, Australia (2000–2001)
- Pastor, Liberty Christian Fellowship, Kill Devil Hills, North Carolina (2002–2006)
- Teaching Pastor, The Life Church (now Love Church), Gainesville, Virginia (2009–2021)

At the time of his passing, Wally was serving as an elder at Love Church.

In 2022, Wally retired from full-time ministry, though he never stopped teaching, encouraging, or sharing God's Word. He devoted his later years to writing blogs and books, continuing to reach others with wisdom, warmth, humor, and heartfelt faith.

Wally will be remembered for his ability to teach God's Word using both humor and memorable illustrations, his steadfast commitment to Christ, and the countless lives he touched. Whether from the pulpit, across a dinner table, or through the written word, he had a remarkable gift for making people feel seen, valued, and deeply loved.

He is survived by his beloved wife of 57 years, Diana "Gwen" Abernathy Odum; his three daughters, Holly, Suzanne, and Jill; and his sister, Rosalie McFarland. Numerous cousins, nieces, nephews and a large extended family

of friends also survive him. He was predeceased by his parents, Wallace Preston Odum, Sr., and Eula Marie Sumpter Odum, and his brother, Claude Winston Odum.

Those wishing to reach the family may do so by email at jillodum35@gmail.com. A Celebration of Life service will be held after the first of the year. Service updates, along with Wally's devotional blog, will be shared on the Facebook page "Wally Odum – Daily Grace."

Tribute Wall



“ So thankful for Wally's life & ministry . We knew him & his parents back in Annandale, VA at Full Gospel Assembly & later it was First Assembly of God. Now that church is called Word of Life, when Wendal Cover built it on Backlick Rd., Springfield, VA. Across the intersection from the smaller church! Love him & his parents when his Dad was District Superintendent of Potomac District!! Wonderful memories!! We moved to FL in 1972 from VA. Lost touch until I saw him & Gwen on F.B. Love you Gwen & girls!!

Patricia Wheaton - February 28 at 01:25 PM

SZ

“ We met Wally at 1st Assembly Church in 1981 after having gone through a church split. He taught us so much during the short time we were there because we were a navy family and got transferred. I was so happy when I was able to reconnect with him and Gwen on facebook. He made scripture come alive and I am reading at present a commentary by G. Campbell Morgan that he recommended and thought highly of. I will miss his daily devotions.

Shirley Zarecki - February 07 at 09:43 PM

FM

“ I was at UVA when Wally decided to leave and start his ministry journey. I also attended the Westminster Assembly of God where he pastored. I double dated with he and Gwen before they were married. He was a dear friend for many years and was a great example of a Christian and in an era of ministers pulling strange shenanigans, he was a great example of how a true minister of the Gospel should live and be. He will be missed.
Frank Marcus

Frank Marcus - February 07 at 06:32 PM

GO

Holly Odum Suzanne Odum Jill Odum...Wally's dear friend.

Gwen Odum - February 07 at 07:16 PM

GO

Thanks Frank!

Gwen Odum - February 07 at 07:17 PM

BN

Wally was my first Pastor after being saved in 1979. He instilled in me a love for God's Word and as 1st Assembly grew so did I. He was gentle, approachable, and lived the life that he preached. He will be sorely missed.

Bob Noebel - February 28 at 07:54 PM

JW

“ *Wally was one of the best bible teaching pastor, he left an impact on many people and will never be forgotten! I continue to pray for Gwen and the family and all who are deeply saddened by his departure. Wally will be greatly missed by all who knew him.*



Janice Woolard - January 03 at 03:08 PM



“ *SamnSheryIn Eli lit a candle in memory of Wallace "Wally" Preston Odum, Jr.*



SamnSheryIn Eli - January 03 at 01:02 PM

BW

“ I attended First Assembly. Pastor Wally was my pastor when I accepted Jesus as my Lord and savior. He married my husband and I in 1980. He was a wonderful person and we will never forget him. Gary and Brenda Wernke

Brenda Wernie - January 03 at 10:13 AM

LI

“ Lily purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Wallace "Wally" Preston Odum, Jr..



Lily - December 16, 2025 at 01:00 PM

LM

“ Wally and his ministry will forever be an important part of my spiritual growth and my life!

Linda McCauley - December 14, 2025 at 06:02 PM