

JACQUELYN ANN "JACQUI" JAMES



Jacquelyn Ann "Jacqui" James, age 86, of Lincoln, MA, passed away peacefully on June 10, 2024. Jacqui was born in Pittsburgh, PA on November 4, 1937, to Lucille Hamilton (nee Graves) and Charles Jordan Hamilton, Sr. Jacqui was raised in Pittsburgh and Nashville, TN where her mother and stepfather, William C. McNeill, Jr. moved the family when she was 9 years old. A prodigious learner, she was

enrolled in an accelerated secondary education program and went to Fisk University at the age of 15. She took a gap year during college to go to Liberia where her parents were stationed as members of USAID. During that time, she also lived in Ghana. Jacqui returned to the United States and transferred to the University of Pittsburgh where she received her undergraduate degree in Economics in 1966. She was formerly married Alan K. James with whom she had two children, Alan Anthony ("Tony") James and Jennifer Alicia ("Jen") James.

Jacqui held various retail and volunteer positions in Pittsburgh while raising her children including working at Reading Is Fundamental. She later became the Director of Religious Education at the First Unitarian Church in Pittsburgh and served on various national committees. She moved to Boston in 1986 to take a position at the headquarters of Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) as the Director of Worship Resources in support of the creation of a new hymnbook. After that seven-year effort was completed, Jacqui continued to work at the UUA first in the Faith in Action department and then in the Religious Education/Faith Development staff group. Her many responsibilities included congregational resource development, lay and professional leadership development, and anti-racism, anti-oppression education and action. Most importantly in all her work, Jacqui cast a vision for an anti-racist Unitarian Universalism and inspired many to work for that possibility. She retired from the UUA in 2002.

A strident believer in social justice and religious freedom, Jacqui continued to serve the church as a member of the Meadville-Lombard Board as well as volunteering at The First Unitarian Universalist Society in Newton (FUUSN) where she was a much-loved member. In recognition of her contributions, she was awarded an honorary Doctorate from Meadville Lombard Theological School in Chicago. An avid quilter belonging to several local quilting guilds and accomplished cook, Jacqui was well-known for her sewing skills and baking talent, especially her delicious assortment of Christmas cookies.

She is survived by her children, Tony James and his spouse, Wanda McClain of Newton, MA and Jen James of Lincoln, MA as well as her grandchildren: Indrani Kharbanda, Kiran Kharbanda & Roshan Kharbanda all of Lincoln, MA. She is also survived by her siblings: Beverly Hamilton Robinson of Chicago, IL, William C. McNeill, III of Philadelphia, PA, Charles J. Hamilton, Jr. of Stamford, CT, and Rod Hamilton of Los Angeles, CA; and nieces, nephews and other family members.

Jacqui's family wishes to extend their heartfelt gratitude to the staff of Good Shepherd Community Care Parlin Hospice in Wayland, MA for their dedicated and compassionate care and comfort provided to Jacqui.

A memorial service will be held on Saturday, July 20, 2024, at 2 p.m. at the First Unitarian Universalist Society in Newton, at 1326 Washington Street, Newton, MA.

Donations may be made "In memory of Jacquelyn ("Jacqui") James" to the Unitarian Universalist Association, <https://giving.uua.org/friends>.

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