

Obituary: Gil A. Stricklin

September 14, 2023

Gil A. Stricklin, founder of Marketplace Ministries and former military chaplain, died Sept. 10 at his home in Dallas. He was 88. Gilford Arthur Stricklin was born Sept. 11, 1934, in Sadler to Lessie Caroline Watson and Gilford Lane Stricklin. He accepted Christ as his Lord and Savior at age 12. At Baylor University, he was president of the freshman class, was a yell leader and served in the ROTC. He met Ann March in the fall semester in 1954, and they dated throughout their years at Baylor. They married May 23, 1958, in Waco. He graduated from Baylor with a business degree and a commission in the U.S. Air Force. As a commissioned officer, he was stationed at Donaldson Air Force Base in South Carolina. After three years on active duty in the Air Force, including a tour to Antarctica, the family moved back to Fort Worth where he attended Texas Christian University, receiving a degree in journalism while working for the *Fort Worth Press* and the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*. He also earned a degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. In 1965, he was invited to join the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association to serve in preparation for the upcoming World Congress on Evangelism and as a special assistant to Graham. For the following six years, he traveled the world, setting up press conferences for the evangelist and working with the media. In 1970, the family moved to Dallas when he went to work for the Baptist General Convention of Texas, where he pioneered the Super Summer Youth Evangelism program, which continues today. At the same time he was serving his 15 years with the BGCT, he also went to flight school and achieved both his instrument and multi-engine rating pilot licenses. He transitioned from the Air Force to the U.S. Army, serving as a chaplain



during Operation Desert Storm and Desert Shield. He graduated from the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College in 1973. In 1983, he graduated from the U.S. Army War College, as only the seventh chaplain to do so. Three years later, he graduated from the National Defense University in Washington, D.C. During his active-duty military service, he officiated nearly 100 funerals at Arlington National Cemetery. In 1994, he retired from the U.S. Army as a colonel after serving his country 37 years—15 years in the Air Force and 22 years in the Army. In 1983, he founded Marketplace Ministries, which offers chaplain care to business employees. The organization now serves more than 1,000 companies with 1.2 million employees being helped. Stricklin was a member and deacon at First Baptist Church in Dallas more than five decades. He was a Distinguished Alumnus at Baylor University, where he was a devoted fan of all sports. He was preceded in death by three brothers, Don, Jerry and Jimmy Stricklin. He is survived by his wife of 65 years, Ann March Stricklin; sons Art and his wife Belinda of Dallas and Cliff and his wife Christy of Denver, Colo.; four grandchildren; and a brother, Charles Stricklin of Newport, Calif. Services will be at 2 p.m. Sept. 19 at First Baptist Church in downtown Dallas. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Marketplace Chaplains—Founder's Endowment, 2001 West Plano Pkwy, Ste 3200, Plano TX 75075.