



# Elias Gurubel

January 3, 1934 - July 18, 2024

Reverend Elias Gurubel passed away Thursday, July 18th, 2024. He died peacefully at home, surrounded by family. A funeral service will be held on Monday, July 29, 2024 at 11:00 AM at Bolton Funeral Home. He will be laid to rest at Columbiana City Cemetery.

Elias was born in the town of Sinanche in Yucatan, Mexico on January 3, 1934 to his father Fulgencio Gurubel and mother Maria Pura Sunza de Gurubel. Elias was the sixth of eleven children. His father was a historic figure in Sinanche, serving as the seaside town's first elected mayor from 1939-1942.

In Mexico, Elias first graduated from Teacher's College and served as Regional Vice President for the Christian Endeavor Ministry of Southeast Mexico. Elias followed his calling to study theology and become a pastor in the US. Bravely forging a new path, he immigrated to Birmingham, Alabama in the mid 1950's. He attended Southeastern Bible College where he graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Christian Theology with honors in 1960. He began a legacy here and would later see his son, daughter, son-in-law, daughter-in-law and granddaughter all graduate and also become alumni of Southeastern Bible College. A lifelong learner, Elias also attended Birmingham Southern College for Graduate school.

While attending Southeastern Bible College he met his wife Nelle Leonard Gurubel, daughter of James Leonard and Maude Howard of Columbiana, Alabama. Nelle and Elias were faithfully married for 63 years and had two children, David and Beth Gurubel. After many years awaiting citizenship, Elias proudly became an American citizen in 1967.

Elias worked for Southern Company, where he earned a reputation as a dedicated and beloved coworker, even conducting a weekly bible study during his lunch hour for his fellow employees. He retired from Southern Company after 23 years.

Reverend Elias was dedicated to serving the Lord by preaching and teaching. He served as Senior Pastor in the United Methodist Conference for fifteen years as bi-vocational minister. He faithfully served churches across the state of Alabama including the congregations of Acmar Methodist, Overton Methodist, Short Creek Methodist, Bayview Methodist and he was the Associate Pastor of Denman Memorial Methodist Church. He also served on the Elder Board of Shades Mountain Independent Church.

Reverend Elias also loved and served others through his commitment and dedication to his greatest ministry, Wonder Book Camp. He and Nelle faithfully directed this camp ministry together from 1959 until its closure in 2023. Over those 64 years of dedication he served as Vice Chairman for the Board of Trustees, teacher, mentor, prayer warrior, and as all campers remember fondly, the candy man at canteen time. His service and work with Wonder Book Camp extends over decades to numerous children, teens, and adults who have all been shaped and impacted by knowing Reverend Elias.

Elias was always known for his gentle and loving patience, kindness and quiet servitude towards others. He loved to sing in the choir of church in his later years and could always be heard joyfully singing at camp. He will also be

remembered for his endearing laugh as he sat together with friends and family over a meal in his home.

Elias leaves behind a legacy of love for the Lord and for those around him. His dedication to his Godly purpose was evident and we are blessed to have known him on his earthly sojourn.

He will be missed but always remembered dearly by his wife, Nelle Leonard Gurubel, his children David Gurubel and Beth (Gurubel) Horting, daughter-in-law Tina Gurubel, son-in-law Kurt Horting, eleven grandchildren, ten great-grandchildren (and counting) and many dear friends.

Notes of memories, words of love, or sympathy for Nelle can be mailed to  
5513 Ave P  
Birmingham, AL 35208

In lieu of flowers and as WBC has now closed, please consider a donation to the Christian Service Mission of Birmingham or Still Water Community Church (Elias's daughter Beth and husband Kurt Horting- Senior Pastors) to support their church's camp scholarship fund.

Please sign online condolences at [www.boltonfuneralhome.com](http://www.boltonfuneralhome.com).

# Cemetery Details

## Columbiana City Cemetery

206 Shelby Road  
Columbiana, AL 35051

# Previous Events

## Funeral Service

JUL **29**. 11:00 AM (CT)

Bolton Funeral Home  
207 Hwy 47 South  
PO Box 4  
Columbiana, AL 35051  
(205) 669-3179

# Tribute Wall

HL

“ Heath & Jeanette Lee purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Elias Gurubel.



Heath & Jeanette Lee - July 29, 2024 at 12:52 PM

HL

“ Heath & Jeanette Lee planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Elias Gurubel.

Heath & Jeanette Lee - July 29, 2024 at 12:52 PM

TF

“ The Kramer family purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Elias Gurubel.



The Kramer family - July 29, 2024 at 08:33 AM

TF

“ The Kramer family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Elias Gurubel.

The Kramer family - July 29, 2024 at 08:33 AM



“ *Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Elias Gurubel.*



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July 27, 2024 at 09:31 AM



“ *Eleanor Wright planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Elias Gurubel.*

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**Eleanor Wright** - July 27, 2024 at 09:31 AM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Elias Gurubel.*



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July 27, 2024 at 01:41 AM



“ *The Hemphill and Gilbert families purchased the Ocean Breeze Spray for the family of Elias Gurubel.*



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**The Hemphill and Gilbert families** - July 26, 2024 at 10:51 AM

TF

“ *The Hemphill and Gilbert families planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Elias Gurubel.*

**The Hemphill and Gilbert families** - July 26, 2024 at 10:51 AM

PH

“ *I have known Elias Gurubel for a long time and he was a kind hearted Christian man and he always had a big smile on his face! I always enjoyed when he would always ask me if he could pray with me and when he got through praying I felt so much better! I will be praying for Nelle, Beth and her family and David and his family and Nelle's sweet Caretaker Amelia( She took care of Elias Gurubel too!*



**Patricia Hammond** - July 24, 2024 at 10:38 AM

JL

*Elias was certainly a good “ a ray of sunshine and joy to all who knew him!  
Love and prayers for Nelle and family.*

**Judy and Ed Lawrence** - July 26, 2024 at 06:02 PM

GT

*Nelle I'm so sorry to see this - I know Elias was a true Christian and will be dearly missed. We know he his with the Lord. Sending you and the family lots of love, hugs and prayers.*

**Gale Thomas** - July 26, 2024 at 06:44 PM

JC

*Prayers for you Nelle. I will understand your loss. The greatest joy is we know we will see them again. God bless you in a special way.*

**Janice Cripe** - July 26, 2024 at 08:03 PM

DS

*I was Elias caregiver he was the sweetest always loved to pray with you I'm going to miss you such a spiritual man 🕊️🕊️🕊️🕊️*

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**Dadranika Scroggins** - July 26, 2024 at 10:32 PM