



George Shahbaz

May 25, 1944 - September 5, 2024

Rev. George Shahbaz passed away on Thursday, September 5th, at 7:30pm at Emanuel Medical Center in Turlock, CA.

Pastor George was not only a leader in the Chicago and Turlock communities for over 50 years. He was a wonderful source of joy to so many of us, and he was an evangelist whose goal was to see everyone he met come to faith in Jesus.

Many called him "The Assyrian Billy Graham," because his goal was to love people until they came to faith in Jesus. He preached Jesus on the radio, he preached Jesus on TV, he preached Jesus from the pulpit... but what he loved the most was to tell people about Jesus face-to-face. Whether it was a member of his church, or his server at a restaurant, he wanted everyone he met to know the hope that could only be found in Jesus, and he did it with Joy and faithfulness his entire life.

Pastor George was born on May 25, 1944 in Kirkuk, Iraq. After High School, he attended Ankara University and received a Diploma in Turkish Language and Islamics. While in Turkey, he found himself interpreting for a Southern Baptist Missionary from Kentucky named Jim Leeper. While interpreting, he came to faith in Jesus. He was baptized by Rev. Jim Leeper on July 17, 1968 at the Galatian Baptist Mission, and George immediately felt God calling him

to a life in ministry. Shortly after, he moved to Beirut Lebanon to attend the Arab Baptist Theological Seminary.

While at seminary, he would often preach or read Christian books on the radio. The receptionist for the radio station was a woman named Amal Nashif, the daughter of a family who prominently supported of the Seminary and the local Baptist Church. George and Amal fell in love, and were married on September 26th, 1970. George graduated in June 1971 with a BA in Theology, and him and Amal would answer their call to ministry together, by moving to Chicago Illinois, as missionaries to the Assyrian people through the Southern Baptist Convention.

While in Chicago, Pastor George lead street ministry, spoke at Christian camps, preached on the radio, and was ordained in Feb 25, 1973, before being named the Associate Pastor for Lake Shore Baptist church in Chicago. By 1982, George and Amal received a new calling that lead them to the Assyrian people in Turlock, California. And in 1984, he was named the Pastor of St. John's Assyrian Presbyterian Church in Turlock.

While in Turlock, Pastor George became a leader in the Assyrian community, and a servant to the most vulnerable around him. In addition to teaching every Sunday, he started a Vacation Bible School program and groups for the youth. He would preach on AssyriaSat-KBSV, and officiate countless weddings and funerals. He began a counseling ministry and became a Tent Maker Missionary for the Central Valley Baptist Association. He would help families with their immigration paperwork, serve communion to the sick or grieving in their homes... even if he was busy, he would give rides to people without transportation, just to make sure they could make it to church on Sunday. Late in his career, he would become the interim Pastor for the United Assyrian Evangelical Church of Turlock. And throughout the years, he never lost his calling to evangelize everyone around him. Through his God-given joy and

infectious spirit, he would bring countless people to faith in Jesus.

In addition to his BA in Theology from the ABS, he received a Master of Arts in Religion from the American Baptist Seminary of the West in 1987. He received a Master of Divinity from the ABSW in 1989. And he received a Doctor of Philosophy in Counseling Psychology from the Carolina University of Theology in 1991.

Pastor George Shahbaz lived a remarkable life. A life devoted to his community, to his family, and ultimately...to his Savior, Jesus Christ.

He is survived by his wife, Amal Shahbaz. His son Peter Shahbaz. And his son Philip Shahbaz and his wife Amy, along with his four grandkids, Jeremiah, Jonah, Jordan, and Cedar.

His funeral service will be on Thursday, September 26 at 2pm:

Turlock Funeral Home
Main Chapel
425 N. Soderquist Rd.
Turlock CA 95380

Reception will be at 3:30pm immediately following the funeral service:

The Assyrian American Civic Club of Turlock
2618 N Golden State Blvd.
Turlock CA 95382

In Lieu of Flowers, donations can be made to The United Assyrian Evangelical Church of Turlock. 2619 N. Berkeley Ave., Turlock, CA, 95382. Words of

sympathy or condolences can be mailed to the same address.

A funeral fund has also been established in his name through the following

link: www.givesendgo.com/georgesahbaz

Cemetery Details

Turlock Memorial Park

575 N. Soderquist Rd.
Turlock, CA 95380
(209) 632-9111
<http://turlockmemorialpark.com>

Previous Events

Funeral Service

SEP **26**. 2:00 PM (PT)

Turlock Funeral Home
425 North Soderquist Road
Turlock, CA 95381
(209) 632-9111
<https://turlockfuneralhome.com>

Interment following Funeral Service

SEP **26**. 3:00 PM (PT)

Turlock Memorial Park
575 N Soderquist Rd
Turlock, CA 95380-3749
(209) 632-9111

Reception

SEP **26.** 3:30 PM (PT)

Assyrian American Civic Club
2618 N. Golden State Blvd.
Turlock, CA 95382

Tribute Wall

EN

“ *My pastor, Dr. George shahbaz was one of the most knowledgeable and humble individuals that I met in my life! I still can hear him saying "Praise The lord"!!!! His voice will be ringing in my ears all my life!*

My deepest condolences to his lovely wife and his beautiful family. May God comfort you all with this hardship. May Lord bless his kind soul in heavenly peace!! You all are in my prayers, I will miss him! :(

Eileen Nariman - September 26, 2024 at 03:28 PM